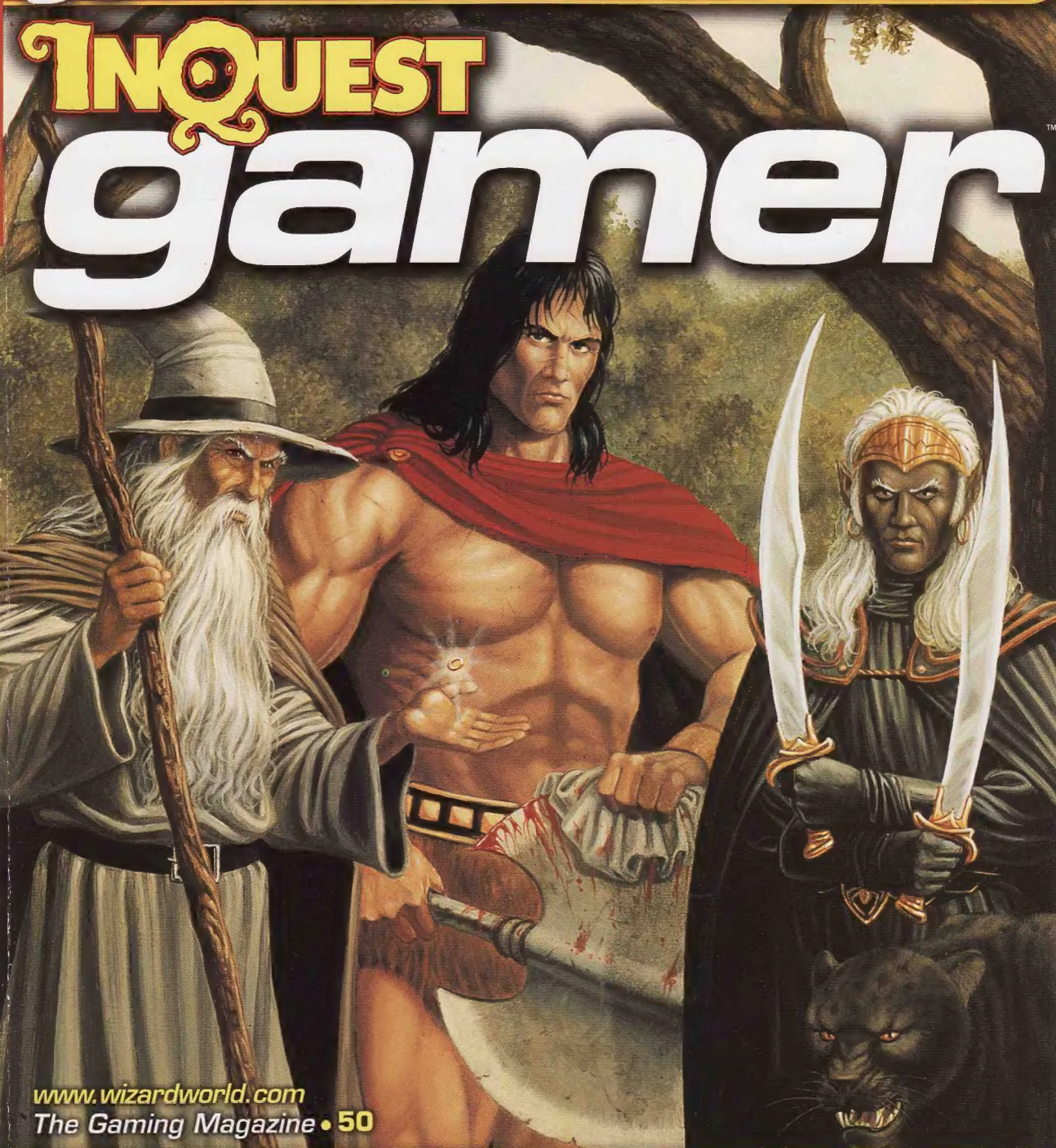


50th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

INQUEST gamer

INQUEST GAMER 50 RPG DREAM TEAM MAGIC TALENT SHOW STAR WARS: EPISODE 7 JEFF AGAINST WORLD GAMEPALDOZA

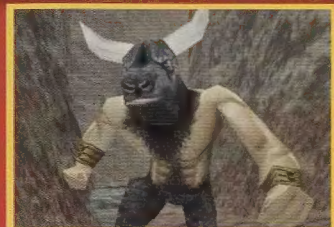


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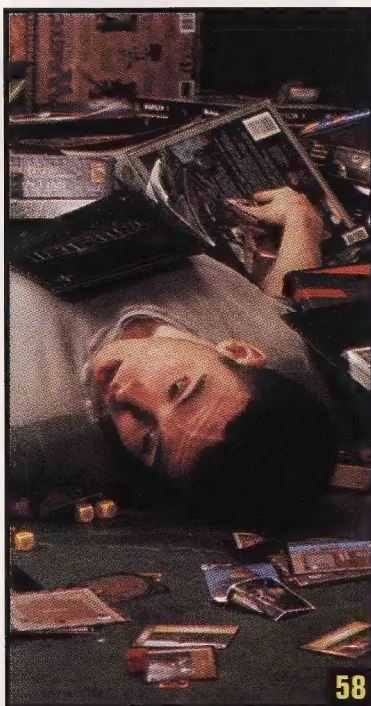
contents

INQUEST GAMER 50 • JUNE 1999



THIS MONTH'S COVERS

Both gatefold covers come to us from legendary fantasy artist Larry Elmore. If you're looking to add some of the cover heroes to your RPG, check out our "Fantastic Four" feature on page 42.



36 JEFF VS. THE WORLD

One *InQuest Gamer* editor makes the ultimate *Magic: The Gathering* challenge.

By the *IQ Gamer* staff.

42 FANTASTIC FOUR

IQ Gamer recruits the ultimate RPG dream team.

By Dan Joyce and the *IQ Gamer* staff.

52 STAR WARS: EPISODE 7

IQ Gamer reveals the destinies of your favorite characters.

By Bill Smith.

58 GAME-APALOOZA

A whirlwind tour of puzzles, cartoons and trivia.

By Sean P. Fannon, Alex Shvartsman and the *IQ Gamer* staff.

66 IQ THEATER: THE TALENT SHOW

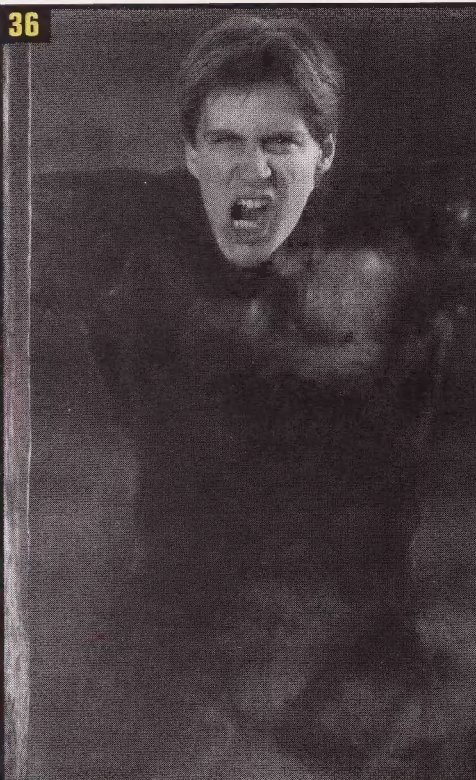
By the *IQ Gamer* staff.

features

66



36



42



52



columns & depts.

cont.

- 8 LETTER FROM THE EDITOR**
- 10 INQUISITION** Letters from the readers
- 18 IQ NEWS**
- 30 COMING SOON** Upcoming releases from the world of gaming
- 100 CARD STOCK** Tracking trends in the gaming industry
- 102 PRICE GUIDE**
- 118 PLAYERS GUIDE**
- 132 AFTER HOURS** A look behind the curtain
- 134 SHOWS, CONS & TOURNAMENTS**
- 136 SWAN SONG** Our wacky take on the world of gaming



18



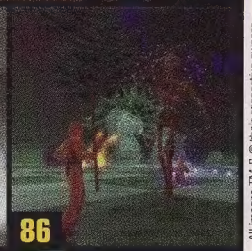
74



78



82



86

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reviews & strategy.

- 74 KILLER DECKS** *Magic and Pokémon* tournament decks
- 78 DECK BUILDING 101** Build a weenie deck in five easy steps
- 82 BASIC TRAINING** Strategies for the *Star Wars* CCG
- 86 PLUGGED IN** Tips and strategies for the hottest PC games, featuring *EverQuest*
- 92 LEGENDS** Original creations to enhance your roleplaying
- 94 ON DECK** Reviews of *EverQuest* • *Unknown Armies* • *The Balrog* and more

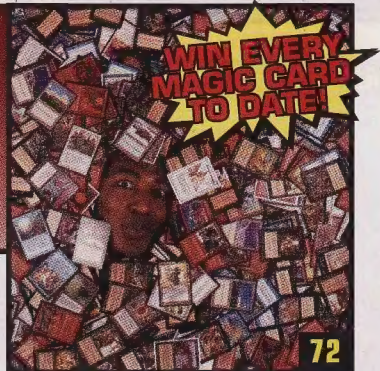


94



98

WIN A COMPUTER!



72

contests

- 72 INQUEST GAMER SCAVENGER HUNT**
Find worthless junk and win one of every single *Magic* card to date!
- 80 DEAD MAN'S HAND**
Rise to the challenge and win a box of *Urza's Destiny*
- 98 "EVERQUEST AND YE SHALL FIND" CONTEST**
Find Cow Nose and win a computer and a copy of *EverQuest*!

Read 'em and Weep.



The *Magic: The Gathering*™ – *Urza's Destiny*™ expansion introduces two killer new ways to wreak havoc on your opponents:

Reveal cards: Show cards from your hand for game-altering effects, like direct damage, counterspell, and life gain

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INQUEST
gamer



"BRING OUT YER DEAD!" *InQuest* has somehow survived four-plus years. Don't ask how.

That's how long we've been slaving away in the *InQuest* offices these past four-plus years. We've seen hundreds of new games hit the market and companies rise and fall, but one thing's for certain: It's like a rollercoaster ride, with just as many highs as lows. That said, here's a taste of what it's like to work for *InQuest Gamer* as we give you our pros and cons of working in the gaming biz:

PRO: Have a *Magic* collection the size of Mount Rushmore.

CON: Spend vacation time sorting cards.

PRO: Cool freebies from gaming companies.

CON: *Spellfire* cards only go so far as organic fertilizer.

PRO: Bring home four-figure paychecks for playing games.

CON: In an effort to be up on things, endless hours of *Battle Cattle*.

PRO: College dormitory mentality around the office means hanging out over Taco Bell lunch, tunes

cranking on the radio and Nerf wars.

CON: College dormitory mentality means an office restroom like Jeffrey Dahmer's unplugged refrigerator.

PRO: Fans want our autographs.

CON: Fans want our autographs on certain body parts.

PRO: Frequent lunch meetings at fine dining establishments like Bennigan's and Chili's.

CON: Back at the office, only one gas mask available.

PRO: Working with creative and interesting people.

CON: 18 hours a day.

PRO: Getting into pre-release tourneys for free.

CON: Embarrassing ourselves by losing to 6 year olds.

PRO: Access to all online games.

CON: Blindness from screen radiation.

PRO: Gamers are very impressed with the gaming knowledge we have.

CON: Girls won't talk to us.

PRO: Can say stuff like "My weenie swampwalked, but was killed because of No Mercy" and boss understands you.

CON: Forget to turn off *Magic* filter, tell wife that "you pumped Serra at lunch" and sleep on couch.

PRO: We put out a jam-packed product we're proud of.

CON: Every month.

The IQ Gamer staff
Game Fiends



When *InQuest* debuted way back in April 1995, the *Magic* set burning up the shelves was none other than the thalids and thrulls of *Fallen Empires*, *Blood Wars*, *Doomtrooper*, *Galactic Empires*, *Jyhah*, even our ol' friend *Spellfire*, were other CCGs kicking around then too.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

masthead

EDITORIAL

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FAVORITE PERK AFTER 50 ISSUES: Buttcheek-soft toilet tissue.

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Get a peek at Urza's Destiny.

Prerelease Tournaments May 29, 1999

Akron	OH	330-922-4263
Albuquerque	NM	505-265-6100
Anchorage	AK	907-272-4112
Atlanta	GA	770-753-0030
Baltimore/Washington, D.C.	MD	301-881-3530
Birmingham	AL	256-880-3726
Boston	MA	617-666-5799
Chicago	IL	847-724-9636
Columbus	OH	888-464-8881
Dallas	TX	316-946-1055
Denver	CO	303-366-3977
Detroit	MI	519-256-8084
Eugene	OR	541-485-0375
Honolulu	HI	808-596-8236
Houston	TX	713-680-1870
Indianapolis	IN	317-773-1370
Knoxville	TN	770-753-0030
Las Vegas	NV	801-232-6137
Lincoln	NE	402-434-5056
Los Angeles Area	CA	818-787-3708
Louisville	KY	888-464-8881
Memphis	TN	901-752-3904
Minneapolis/St. Paul	MN	920-623-2791
New Orleans	LA	713-680-1870
New York	NY	212-633-6320
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Philadelphia	PA	212-633-6320
Phoenix	AZ	818-787-3708
Pittsburgh	PA	888-464-8881
Raleigh/Durham	NC	336-889-9900
Salt Lake City	UT	801-232-6137
San Francisco Bay Area	CA	650-947-0398
Seattle	WA	206-675-1608
St. Louis	MO	314-947-8330
Syracuse	NY	212-633-6320
Wichita	KS	316-946-1055

CANADA

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Magic: The Gathering®—
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tournaments . . . it is your destiny.**

Each attendee receives one commemorative *Urza's Destiny* card while supplies last, one *Urza's Saga™* tournament pack, and three *Urza's Destiny* boosters.

Some cities will feature second-day overflow tournaments on May 30. Fees vary by location. Check with your local tournament organizer for further information.

Preregistration ends 5:00 P.M. local time, Wednesday, May 26, 1999.

For worldwide tournament locations and information visit www.sideboard.com or call (800) 324-6496.



LOVE... HATE... AND LEDERHOSEN...

Yowza, 50 issues! Counting the mag you're holding, that's how many InQuests there have been. That's roughly 6,500 pages of gamey goodness. I prefer to think of it as 1.75 million words of whacked-out wisdom, but that's probably just me. Me? I'm Tom Slezewski—say it slow: "Tahm Joe•nz"—the new staff DL (Designated Letter-answerer). It's my job to sift through your letters each month and take the raw mud of your missives and shape it into the gleaming pillar of thoughtful debate that is Inquisition. Last month's "all chick" edition is just the type of cutting-edge journalism you can expect here every month. And to prove it, I called in some IOU's and got Mr. Bell Z. Bub himself, Satan, as guest DL for this milestone issue. Take it away, horned one...

Hi-ya kids! Like you, I love all things Magic. Except when they ban cards like Darkpact, that really burns my buns. But enough about me, let's hear what's on the minds of some of my future, uh... pals.

JOCK ITCH

Lately I've been catching some guff for playing *Magic*. Mostly, it comes from jocks who make fun of anyone different from them. These are the kinds of guys who would pay \$3 for a baseball card they can only stare at. I pay \$3 for *Magic* cards but I actually use them and don't just wait until they're worth something. So I ask you, who's more stupid?

*K. Krunch
Cyberspace*

All the jocks in my realm have to run laps for eternity around a really hot asphalt track—think supermarket parking lot in Arizona, in July, except hotter—in their bare feet with no "athletic support," while Magic players sit in the shade and taunt them.

LOVE

This is truly a good time for gamers. It's a good time for all gamers! Now thanks to the extended coverage of CCGs, RPGs and computer games, gamers finally have a great mag to call their own. I love your extensive coverage of my favorite, the *Star Wars CCG*, and the "IQ News" section is great, giving important info to the gaming community. Keep up the good

work. I love the new format.

*Aaron Conoly
Princeton, Texas*

His joyous nature displeases me, shall I fry him?

No, don't. He seems wise beyond his years. Also, he hasn't paid for his subscription yet.

HATE

I like your new format. Wait, let me rephrase, I would like your new format if I smoked enough weed and took some LSD! Why are you adding all this computer game crap? And why don't you ever talk about Palladium games? Their game system is best, excluding *AD&D* of course.

*Alex Calligan
Cyberspace*

Why did you guys change the name to "InQuest Gamer"? It's stupid, and the layout sucks. Where's "Creative Campaigning"? Where's "Role Call"? And why the hell are you giving more coverage to *Magic*? That game is practically dead!

*Justin Paul
Philadelphia, Pa.*

Their whiny nature displeases me. Shall I fry them?

They won't be missed.

PEN PALS

Get in touch with your fellow game fans! Send your name, address, e-mail address (if you've got one), age, gender and three favorite games to IOPenPals@aol.com or mail it to us at: **I.Q. Pen Pals,**
InQuest Gamer, 151 Wells Ave.,
Congers, NY 10920.

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Magic: The Gathering*

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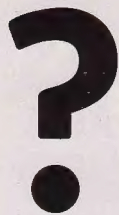
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Dark World*

Inquisition



Wait a minute Mr. Postman. Inquisition has received over 13,000 letters the past four years.



Kitty Letter

the **LETTER**
of the **MONTH**
as chosen by
COW NOSE,
the 50-pound cat

Five years ago, I was the kid in the back row of your math class that everyone thought was mute. Three weeks ago, I retired with the legacy as the best *Magic* player of my group. In the world's eyes I was nothing, but in *Magic*, I was respected, accepted and feared like Stasis itself. But then, a friend got in trouble, so I sold every card I had to help. And after five years of blood, sweat and mana, I have but one thing to say: Thank you Richard Garfield—not for this wonderful game, ingenious company or unique game system, but thank you, because every kid that played, at least for a moment, found the encouragement they should have gotten in life. From the Captain of the Lost, thank you.

*Brian Scott
El Campo, Texas*

P.S. A friend asked if I regretted losing my collection. I replied, "No, but I should have bought more *InQuests* to read."

You're a genius Brian. And there's a lesson here for everyone not wanting to live a life of regret: Buy more InQuests! I'm surprised, however, that with Brian's high-level butt-kissing skill—Richard Garfield and InQuest all in one short letter—that he's not at least the Colonel of the Lost.

BRING BACK MY STAR WARS TO ME

What's is going on with West End Games? I've been GMing *Star Wars* for two years now and buy at least six sourcebooks a year. I am a huge fan of both the RPG and CCG with a book collection of around 60 and a card collection of around 10,000. Naturally it brought me to tears when I heard about the bankruptcy filing. But what's happened since you first reported WEG's filing for bankruptcy? Please, please, please say *Star Wars* will be back. If you do, I will buy every Atog I see for the rest of my life and send them to you. If you don't, you're a buttweasel.

*Tim Sanderson
Cyberspace*

You dare call me a furry dweller of the anal region! I suggest you invest in asbestos underwear before we next meet.

Cool it, fiery one, and answer the question.

Hey pal, trying to get through to Lucas-film a month before the first "Star Wars" prequel release takes more magic than even I can muster.

The truth is, the Star Wars RPG continues to rest in limbo. However, WEG did put in an appearance at March's GAMA show (see "IQ News", page 18) so anything is still possible.

BLOODSUCKERS

WotC must think their customers are dumbass Kird Apes shelling out our hard-earned money for those precious foil cards. But not me! A friend of mine once said that he will stop buying *Magic* cards the day the packs include bubble gum. I am not going to wait that long. I will quit now 'cause I'm already dreaming about Peter "The Lcid" Adkison taking a bath in champagne and going nuts by counting the extra dollars he squeezed out of kids chasing those so called "premium" cards.

*Stefan Rather
Hamburg, Germany*

I like monkeys.

Primates rule! Especially Kird Apes and Simian Grunts.

TOP 5 REASONS TO KEEP THE HURLOON MINOTAUR

- 5) Has the best pick-up line: "I'm horny, but aren't we all!"
- 4) Only Anson Maddocks artwork that isn't twisted.
- 3) Tattoos are cool. Facial tattoos are doubly so.
- 2) Since Jordan's retired, the only bull worth watching.
- 1) No other card says "Do you play *Magic*?" in any language.

*John "Mace" Moesner
Dayton, Ohio*

Also, its face kinda looks like mine.

Tone it down, brimstone britches. You're going to get us in trouble. And speaking of britches...

LEDERHOSEN BOY

I'm a 14 year-old German boy and I missed about five issues of your magazine! Where can I get them? Oh, and before I forget, everyone in America thinks all Germans wear leather pants! But that's wrong! I'm living in Germany, not in Austria! I just wanted to set that point clear.

*Jens Riker
Germany*

Don't believe him. All German kids wear the lederhosen, it's the law. You wear 'em and you like it or you go to jail.

Aiii... Stop lying, or I'm gonna get fired. We've been getting lots of back issue requests lately. If you're interested in getting past issues of IQG just call (914) 268-3594 or e-mail wizmart@aol.com. Each issue costs \$6, plus \$2 shipping for your whole purchase, and some are in very low supply.

You summon the prince of darkness, but expect me not to lie? I should show you what "fired" really means.

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Burrrrrp! If you ate one copy of every InQuest, you'd have consumed a whopping 21 pounds of paper.

In Search of...

CARD BOXES



InQuest Gamer seeks **REAL ANSWERS TO STUPID QUESTIONS**

To: Amulet Jewelry Catalog

I am searching for a box—inset with gems and/or having nice detail work and made of precious metal. This box will be used to hold my favorite 60-card *Magic: The Gathering* deck. Thank you for your time.

Yours truly,
E.T. Dudley

My only suggestion is a solid silver box I had hand made for a valuable gemstone. The box has a hinged lid and fleur de lis design on all sides. It weights about 5 ounces and is about 3 inches by 4 four inches by 2 inches. I want \$1000 for this one-of-a-kind box.

Yours,
David Dikinis, Gemologist

ON THE BANNED WAGON?

I want to express my concern at WotC's recent efforts to ban the distribution of a shareware program called *Apprentice*, a virtual playing table for online gamers to meet and play *Magic*, design decks, etc.

I appreciate WotC's interest in protecting their intellectual property.

As they are a business, their chief aim is to earn a profit, and that is their right. However, I see banning *Apprentice* as unnecessary and possibly to their detriment. Through *Apprentice*, I myself have introduced several friends to *Magic*. These are people I do not get to see often who attend schools in other states. At my prodding, these people downloaded the program and tried it out, only to discover that they loved the game. Many of them have gone on to spend hundreds of dollars on *Magic*.

I understand that WotC may want to replace *Apprentice* with their own commercial version. If this is their plan, I hope that they include *Apprentice*'s developers in the creation of that product.

Charles J. Kowalski
Trenton, Michigan

I too love my apprentice. He does point-less menial labor under the auspices of being an "intern." What a dork! Right now, I've got him sweeping the floor in my condo—with a toothbrush.

That's not a real helpful answer, pitchfork boy. Let's talk with WotC public relations manager Kristine Szarkowitz—pronounced "Smith"—to get the real story behind the banning of Apprentice, the shareware program: "There is no banning. We entered into a cooperative program with Dragonstar to jointly develop the software. Apprentice and Netdraft are back on line and still free. WotC stepped in simply because we want to keep control of our property and not have Magic misrepresented. The most current version of these programs should be available at any of the popular Magic sites."

DIE INQUEST! DIE! DIE! DIE!

I was skimming through *The Duelist* recently, and in one section asking employees what they hoped to see in 1999, one of the editors said *InQuest*'s bankruptcy. Did you know that they hate you?

Stan James
Lansing, MI

Said wisher of bad tidings was Dungeon Adventures magazine editor Christopher Perkins. When asked about his comments he wrote us this letter:

There have been concerns voiced about my desire to see *InQuest* vanish like David Copperfield's career, the dodo or *Troll* magazine. Well, I have three words for you, my friends: This isn't Poland. We live in America, the land of the free. I can decry *InQuest* and condemn the magazine to bankruptcy if I want to. It's called free speech; if that bothers you, go back to Warsaw. They don't have toilets there, but hey, you guys obviously like to dump your crap on other people anyway.

Stan, maybe you're too naive to understand the cutthroat, Doberman-eat-poodle nature of the gaming industry, so here's what I suggest you do: Pull the box of crayons out of your derriere—that's French for ass—and go back to shooting shaving cream up your nostrils, gluing four-sided dice to your forehead and looking at the pretty pictures in your shiny new *InQuest Gamer*. When you can show me your grade nine diploma and can handle really big words like "irony" and "satire," I'll give you a free subscription to a real gaming magazine and buy myself a flying pig.

According to his associates at Wizards of the Coast, what Chris really meant to say was: "I facetiously replied 'InQuest's bankruptcy' when asked what I'd like to see most in 1999. The comment, made in jest, was never intended as an affront to InQuest, its dedicated staff, its loyal readers and the gaming industry in general. Truly, I would not wish bankruptcy upon anyone. The comment pointed to the growing and healthy competition

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\$58,694. That's the combined value of all the grand prizes given away in *InQuest* contests.



ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

between our respective magazines, but it was a jaded, smart-aleck remark. My sincere apologies to all who were offended."

COFFEE BOY

I am interested in applying as an intern/coffee boy at *InQuest*. I have a lot of great ideas and a very creative mind. Also, I could live at the offices and guard them from burglars and other bad people. I'm 6'2", so I can reach things on the tallest shelves. But what's a "coffee boy" you might ask? A coffee boy is a person who makes and gives coffee to people who want it.

*Sam Fondry
Exeter, N.H.*

Thanks for the offer Sam, but we don't have many tall shelves and don't drink enough coffee to keep you busy. There is, however, often a line for the single

restroom here at *InQuest*. We'd certainly welcome a guy who wouldn't mind holding a bucket while a guy... You know...

Are you interested in any other internships?

HELP! SEND CARDS

I live in a remote area of Alaska, a town of about 20 people. My friends all play *Magic*, but I always win. They don't have good enough decks, I suppose. That's where you all come in. I would ask that you pass the hat around the *InQuest* office, and see if you can find a pile o' cards to help my beleaguered buds compete. They really need the help. They are Kina Smith and Ayaire Voorhees at Box WWP, Ketchikan, Ak 99950.

*Ethan Cantil
Ketchikan, Alaska*

We passed the hat for our Eskimo pals but regretfully it came back with

no *Magic* cards, just a *Spellfire* doorstep—also known as a starter deck—a powdered donut with a bite out of it, four AOL disks and a life counter that only goes to 19.

*I could hook your friends up with all the *Magic* cards they want... Of course, they'd have to sign this piece of paper.*

STICK A FORK IN PC MAGIC

What happened to Microprose's *Magic* for the PC? They haven't released the *Fallen Empires* cards and haven't said anything about future additions. The game needs numerous improvements as well, like adding higher resolution graphics and fixing some of the bugs.

And how about a *Dominaria Magic* online game? It could be like a cross between *Ultima Online*, *Baldur's Gate* and *Magic*. You could trade, duel, search around, build your deck, etc. It would be cool. Is Microprose planning any of this?

*Johnny Doericker
Cyberspace*

*According to WatC: Microprose's *Magic* PC game will no longer be supported. There are no plans for future expansions or updates. The *Magic* team is currently working on the next online version of *Magic*. It's too early to reveal details, but they claim it will be the best computer *Magic* product fans have ever seen.*

*That concludes my time here, kids. Easiest soul I ever bagged. Remember, keep playin' *Magic*, and I'll be seein' ya.*

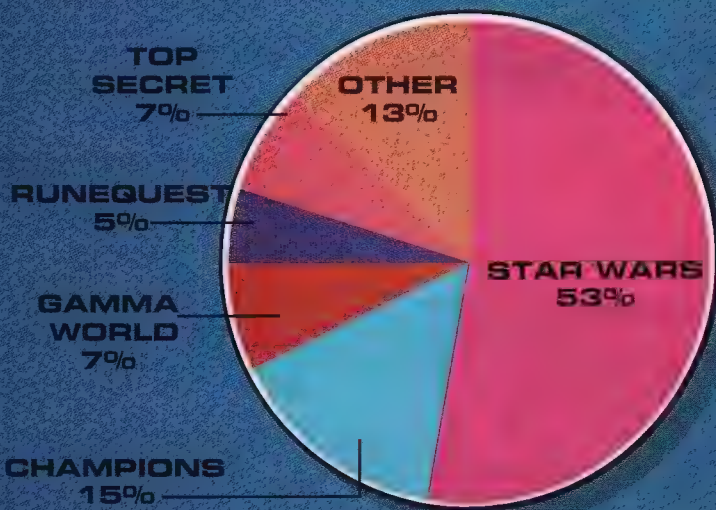
I suddenly feel so empty. Hope you enjoyed "Inquisition," though. Have a good month and check back here in 30 sleeps.

Tom Slizewski

Anyone doubting Tom Slizewski has no soul becomes a believer once they see him dance.

Poll Position ONLINE QUESTION OF THE MONTH

IF YOU COULD BRING BACK ONE DEAD RPG, WHICH WOULD YOU CHOOSE?



Fans definitely want their *Jedis*, and while the future of that game is up in the air, our second place finisher, *Champions*, is due for a new edition real soon. The biggest surprise, over half of the "other" votes wanted to see TSR's old, non-Saga *Marvel Super Heroes* and *Mayfair's DC Heroes* back in print. And while there's not much hope for a new *Marvel* game, the *DC Heroes'* system is in use right now in *The Blood of Heroes* RPG. You can check it out at the publisher's website, www.PulsarGamesInc.com.

Send yer letters to:
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Include your full name, mailing address and phone number in all letters. Some letters may be edited for space and clarity.



There have been 178 original, playable *Magic* cards printed in *InQuest* since issue #1. That's enough for a set all entirely on its own—in fact, it would contain more cards than 10 of the sets in *Magic*.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

What's happening
in the world of gaming...

news

Viva Las Vegas

JACKPOT OF NEW GAMES ANNOUNCED AT GAMA TRADE SHOW

Elvis was not in the building, but elves were. Considering the building was the Orleans hotel in Las Vegas and it was hosting the annual Game Manufacturers of America (GAMA) trade show, that's not surprising. It's at this show every spring that roleplaying and other hobby game companies announce their new products and show off their latest wares. From what we saw, this year's game crop looks promising, not a hound dog in the bunch:

- The biggest news came from Precedence Entertainment, which not only announced a projected October release for a CCG based on Robert Jordan's *Wheel of Time* fantasy book series, but also a *Tomb Raider* CCG due out at Gen Con. Precedence plans to have roleplaying games based on both properties out early next year. Winter '99 should also see a revision of their *Immortal* RPG and two expansions for the *Babylon 5* CCG and a new non-collectible *B5* card game.

- *Feng Shui* will be back on store shelves in August now that it's been acquired by Atlas Games. This RPG has been much missed since Daedalus Entertainment went belly up. Sequel games to the hits *Lunch Money* and *Once Upon a Time* are rumored to be in the works for the year's end.

- At Hero Games, things are gearing up for a Gen Con release of *Champions, Fifth Edition* as well as *Champions: New Millennium, Second Edition*, which will include both Hero System and Fusion stats. Also, look for the anime-based *Dragonball Z* RPG to show up using the Fuzion system. Hero also hopes to make a splash with their line of software for creation and conversion of game stats; featured games include *Deadlands*, *Call of Cthulhu* and *GURPS* among others.

- Hubris Games did well enough with its first edition of *Maelstrom* RPG to warrant a second. This August release will be a "big fat" product in the words of company president, Christian Aldridge, with a complete world setting and revised rules.

- And speaking of maelstroms... FASA's big release for August of '99 will be *VOR: The Maelstrom*, a sci-fi/fantasy, character-based miniatures game where players can play anything from mutant Soviets to psionic, alien martial artists to a bright and shiny version of the undead. FASA will also be releasing a *Shadowrun* quick-start guide to get players into their best-selling game fast. It should retail for about seven bucks.



HOW DO I PLAY!? (Clockwise from left) *Tomb Raider*, *Wheel of Time* and *VOR* games announced.



In February '96, Fred Fields' beckoning mummy artwork on *InQuest* #10 won an award for best newsstand magazine cover. The award plaque still hangs above Managing Editor Tom Slizewski's desk, right next to our custom-designed Atop Pez dispenser.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

INSIDE



EATING ON THE RUN In *VOR: The Maelstrom*, you can be anything—even a chicken.

- Pinnacle Entertainment also plans to have a big year. *The Great Rail Wars* miniatures game will be revised into a second edition and retitled *Grim Crusade*. The core *Deadlands* rulebook will also do the second edition thing, with a release at Origins in July. *Brave New World*, Pinnacle's new superhero RPG (see page 24) will be introduced at Origins with the trial of the heroic Patriot. His execution is set for Gen Con along with the release of the game. Yeesh! Talk about your kangaroo courts!

- Alderac Entertainment Group's swashbuckling *Seventh Sea* RPG is set for a June release and *No Quarter*, the CCG adaptation created in conjunction with Five Rings Publishing, is another Gen Con release. Their *Imperial City* box set for the *Legend of the Five Rings* RPG is also due this summer.

- Not enough Star Wars for you this summer? Decipher's top secret *Young Jedi CCG* should hit shelves almost immediately after the film's release. It's a new system, not compatible with the existing *Star Wars CCG*, intended to be easier to learn. For the existing game, *Endor* should see publication near spring's end as well as the *Blaze of Glory* expansion for the *Star Trek CCG*.

- Holy moley! Who'd a thunk it? After months of speculation and with the help of French investors, West End Games seems to be back on track. The much awaited reissue of the tile game *Kings & Things* is due this summer, as well as a new edition of *Paranoia*. But there's even bigger news from WEG: The *DC Universe RPG* is a go again! Expect superheroes like Batman, Superman and the Flash to roll out in a box set in late summer. However, there's still no comment on the future of their *Star Wars RPG*.

- Speaking of back from the dead... Avalon Hill is now a dedicated arm of Hasbro—dedicated to strategy games, that is. These won't be available at your local Toys R Us but only at your local hobby stores. Expect a big roll-out at Gen Con, including revised editions of classics like *Acquire* and *Diplomacy* (with—gasp—metal pieces!) as well as a new Civil War game. There are also plans for a new and different RPG-like strategy game titled *Stratego Legends* and a revamped form of *Axis & Allies*, focusing on the war in Europe. Also on the horizon: *Diplomacy* for the computer.

- Fantasy Flight Games will continue its strong track-record of innovative products with the release of *DiscWars* in June. In this groundbreaking fantasy game, armies composed of elves, dragons etc. are represented by differently sized discs and flipped along

the table to determine combat. Trust us. You have to see it to understand it. Later in the summer, *Thunder's Edge* will give players the chance to dominate a planet of the same name by any means possible—military, political and any number of ways in between. And since these guys never sleep, they're also releasing *Cthulhu Live, Second Edition*.

- Of course, there's plenty of *Magic* planned for '99. First up is *Urza's Destiny* in June. The next stand-alone set, yet-untitled, is scheduled for October. Otherwise, look for Wizards of the Coast/TSR to continue to celebrate *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons'* 25th anniversary with memorial products like the revised *White Plume Mountain* and *Against the Giants* modules. *Pokémon* CCG cards continue to sell like candy to kindergartners, and June will see the *Jungle* expansion. Also from TSR this fall comes a cool dark conspiracy-themed supplement for *Alternity* entitled *Dark Matter*.

- Last Unicorn had fallen off the viewscreen but was at GAMA promising their long overdue *Star Trek RPG* supplements. This summer should see the Romulan box set, the long-awaited *Deep Space Nine RPG*, the "classic" *Star Trek RPG* and the *Dune RPG*, based on the works of Frank Herbert.

- *Conspiracy X* from Eden Studios is making waves with sourcebooks on new conspiracy types, the "New World Order" across Europe and *Area 51*, the latter due to come out as a box set at year's end. And while on the subject, Steve Jackson Games' *GURPS Conspiracy X* is nearing completion and due for release by Christmas.

- Holistic Design's *Fading Suns* RPG is also doing the second edition thing this summer.

- And last, but definitely not least, Thunder Castle Games continues to add to its *Highlander* CCG franchise. Up next is a free online version of the game.

InQuest Gamer will keep you posted as all these projects develop over the next few months.

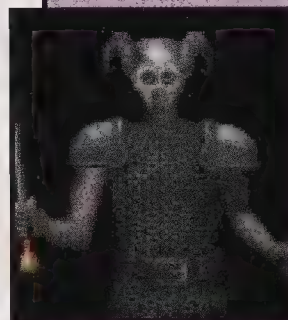
■ Brent Fishbaugh



Digital Werewolves. PAGE 22.



Brave New World Coming. PAGE 24.



Record Sum Paid for RPG characters. PAGE 26.

PLUS:

Battle.net is #1. PAGE 20.

Magic Grand Prix Primer. PAGE 28.

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Battle.net King of Online Hill

2 MILLION-PLUS LOG ONTO BLIZZARD SITE

If you've noticed an increase in the number of busy signals you receive when calling into your internet service provider, it's probably because game jockeys are jamming the phone lines.

Blizzard Entertainment's online game service, Battle.net, has logged more than 2.1 million users in the first two months of this year, a 50 percent increase from last year. This huge traffic volume has made Battle.net—home of the immensely popular *Starcraft: Brood War*—the world's largest Internet playing venue with peak hours topping out at more than 50,000 players competing simultaneously.

According to Bill Roper, director of third party development at Blizzard, "We believe that the combination of excellent games, ease of access and the fact that the service is free to our customers have been key factors to making Battle.net so popular."

According to Roper, the industry has really just started to take off, much to the delight of gaming fans across the globe. "The quality of games that can be played online has continued to rise, as well as the quality of the services that support these games. When you combine that with the ability to instantly meet and play against hundreds and thousands of gamers across the world as well as get involved in a community of people who have the same interests as you, it is no surprise that playing online has become so popular," he said. What is surprising is that the United States is not the number one market for Battle.net, it's South Korea. The United States is currently number two. ■ *Chuck Bednar*



JACK IN Thousands of gamers are hooking into battle.net.

WE LOOKED IT UP...



ACOLYTE (ack•ah•lite)

1. An attendant or assistant, like an altar boy.
2. The highest minor order in the Catholic church.
3. Multani's Acolyte: Green Urza's Legacy 2/1 creature that allows you to draw a card when it comes into play.
4. What vampires say when you point a lantern at them. ■

WotC Growing into Miniatures

Being top dog in collectible card and roleplaying games isn't enough for Wizards of the Coast. The company that owns *Magic* and *Dungeons & Dragons* recently announced it is going full-force into miniatures.

"We've [TSR] really been in the miniatures field for 20 years. Almost since the beginning," said Peter Adkison, president of Wizards of the Coast, the company that owns TSR. Until the end of 1998, Ral Partha, a leading miniatures manufacturer, produced official *D&D* miniatures under license.

"The only difference now is we're taking miniatures in-house. I believe we have much better capability to distribute and market them," Adkison said.

Wizards of the Coast-produced miniatures will likely be marketed under the WotC brand name. Bob Watts, a long-time leader in the miniatures field, will join Wizards of the Coast as a vice president to head up the brand. Watts served most recently as president of Ral Partha. Prior to that, he owned and operated Heartbreaker-Target, a miniatures games manufacturer best known for the *Warzone* game.

Fans shouldn't be much affected by this change, except that minis are more likely to be available at local hobby stores. ■ *M.P. Goode*



LEAD HEADS WotC will start making *D&D* minis.



The concept for *InQuest* began four and half years ago over a bag of potato chips. Editor Mike Searle taught Editor-in-Chief Pat McCallum and Specials Editor Doug Goldstein how to play, gave them each an all-commons, *Unlimited* deck and the ideas started flowing from there.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

PC Apocalypse

WEREWOLF COMPUTER GAME LOOKS LIKE A HOWL

Werewolves are real. At least you'll think so after loading up ASC Games' latest computer offering this fall.

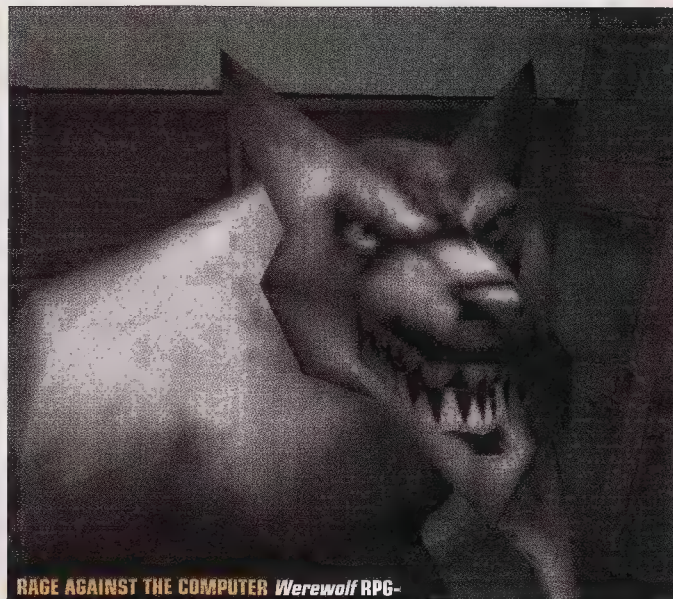
The twisted minds that produced the innovative 3D shooter *Sanitarium* are hard at work on their latest reality-warping project—*Werewolf: The Apocalypse, The Heart of Gaia*. Based on the White Wolf roleplaying game of the same name, this first-person action game sets you up as a fledgling werewolf.

Fans of the roleplaying game won't be disappointed; the design team is led by gaming veteran Travis Williams, one of the RPG's original authors. *Heart of Gaia* uses the *Unreal* engine as its backbone, but this is not your typical shooter. For starters, it introduces character morphing technology. As Williams points out, "You can't make a game about werewolves if you're gonna cheese-out on the morphing."

You can freely change among three forms. The homid state is your human form, which offers the advantage of letting you use firearms. In the lupus wolf form, you can run faster, fit through narrow spaces and track your prey by scent. And in the half-man, half-wolf crinos form, you are nine feet of pure destruction. Morphing between forms is fluid, and an integral part of the game. You can change forms at any time, even while jumping. In fact, some of the game's puzzles can only be solved by switching forms on the fly.

Heart of Gaia starts out as a quest for vengeance, but turns into a desperate search for the title artifact and a face-to-face showdown with the Wurm, the werewolves' greatest foe.

As you advance through the game you are rewarded with potent spell-like abilities—abilities like wasp talons, which sends



RAGE AGAINST THE COMPUTER *Werewolf* RPG-based PC game introduces morphing technology.

a swarm of insects to encircle your foe, causing damage and setting you up for a lethal attack, and "Blur of the Milky Eye," which can render you invisible—useful in those rare instances when direct confrontation isn't the answer.

Heart of Gaia also offers a deathmatch multiplayer option, where you can choose to be from one of several tribes—each with its own special powers. For more information, be sure to swing by www.ascgames.com, where you'll find the latest updates every full moon. ■ *Jeff Hannes*

BLAST FROM THE PAST A LOOK AT OUR FAVORITE CLASSIC GAMES

NAME: *Wolfenstein 3D*

ORIGIN: Id Software 1991

TYPE: Computer Game

CONCEPT: You're B. J. Blazkowicz, a prisoner of the Nazis being held in the dungeons below a medieval castle. You escape from your cell and start plugging Adolf's finest in an attempt to stop German mad scientists from perfecting an unholy plan to raise an army of undead soldiers.

LEGACY: *PC Gamer* magazine voted it one of the eight most important computer games ever created. *Wolfenstein* paved the way for the modern 3-D shooter. It's the father of the megahit *Doom* and great-grandfather of current favorites like *Unreal* and *Half-Life*. Its combination of "realism"—your viewpoint was through the eyes of the character—and over-the-top violence made it an instant hit. Everyone, it seems, enjoys blowing away cartoon Nazis.

TIME-FRAME: The year B.J. first blasted the bad guys saw the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. and the Rodney King beating in L.A. The film "Thelma and Louise" was golden at the box office, and the N.Y. Giants edged out the Buffalo Bills 20-19 in the Super Bowl. ■ *Tom Slizewski*



InQuest lost its staples beginning with issue #30 in September of 1997, almost two years ago. In the most famous of staple losses, *Playboy* lost its almost exactly 12 years earlier in October of 1985.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

Pinnacle Creates Brave New World

"PARANORMALS" FOCUS OF NEW RPG

"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what your country might do to you." That's a quote from President-for-Life John F. Kennedy in the fascist America of *Brave New World*, the upcoming superhero roleplaying game from Pinnacle Entertainment, the makers of the *Deadlands* RPG.

Matt Forbeck, president of Pinnacle Entertainment and the lead designer of *BNW*, describes the setting as "a world in which basic human rights don't get much more than lip service, and you play one of the few people with the power to do something about it." The United States has been under martial law since a team of disgruntled superhumans attempted to assassinate President Kennedy in 1963.

Today, civil rights and personal liberties are largely a thing of the past—especially if you're a paranormal "Delta." Either you register with the government and possibly get recruited or you become a Defiant, an outlaw dedicated to restoring democracy to a nation that's been brought up to fear you.

Unlike many superhero RPGs, *Brave New World's* system isn't designed to handle every power imaginable. "Most superhero roleplaying games seem to be about simulating the entire breadth of the world of comic books," said Forbeck. "We're more interested in telling this particular story." Players choose their powers from preconstructed packages—super-strength, flight, invisibility—which are designed to be internally balanced.

Each supplement will feature more power packages, allowing for additional depth in character design. Pinnacle has support products for *BNW* lined up well into next year. After the release of the core rules will be a gamemaster's screen, followed by *Ravaged Planet*, which fleshes out the game's dark setting. Three organization sourcebooks are next: *Defiants* talks about the rebel Deltas and their fight for liberty, *Delta Prime* details the government's quasi-military superteam and *Triumph, Inc.* is a hero-for-hire organization that rents out registered Deltas to the highest bidder. *Brave New World* will debut at this year's Gen Con convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the weekend of August 5-8.

■ Jason Schneiderman



SUPER "MAN" Brave New World:
not your cliché superheroes.

JURY BOX WE REACH A VERDICT



THUMBS UP

NEW CCGS, FINALLY! Few new CCGs have been published since *Magic's* play methods were patented. That looks to be changing with Precedence announcing *Tomb Raider* and *Wheel of Time* CCGs. *Chronicles of Amber* and *No Quarter*—the CCG related to the *Seventh Sea* RPG—are also in development.

HASBRO The toy and game mega-giant looks to be serious about becoming a player in our hobby. Products like *Diplomacy* with metal pieces and an updated *Axis & Allies* has us drooling with anticipation.

ULTIMA ADD-ONS Cool additions like the new evil and good special powers are keeping this online game competitive in a rapidly growing field.



THUMBS DOWN

UNGLUED II CANCELED Bye-bye B.F.M., bye-bye Squirrel Farm, bye-bye Poultrygeist. You made us laugh, you made us cry, you just didn't make people buy.

NEVERQUEST When you actually get to play the newest multiplayer online game, *EverQuest*, it absolutely rocks. But with insufficient capacity, the title

seems to refer to how long it takes to log on. And don't even get us started on server lag.

DIVIDED WE FALL The hobby game industry stands together only once a year, at the GAMA trade show. It's a shame when big companies like Palladium Books, of *Rifts* fame, and White Wolf—*Vampire*, et al.—choose not to attend. We missed ya.

CONTEST WINNERS

ED McMAHON IS ON THE WAY!

NAME YOUR PRICE

Corey Woodall from the great white north—Victoria, BC, Canada—guessed within \$3 to win the nearly \$5,000 worth of games.

DEAD MAN'S HAND: MESS O' SQUIRES

Austin, Texas' R. Boney and A. Nelson tag-teamed the correct answer to this brain bender and pinned down a box of *Urza's Saga* boosters. ■



As of issue #49, *InQuest Gamer* had published over 6,600 pages of text; that's almost five times the length of the Bible.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

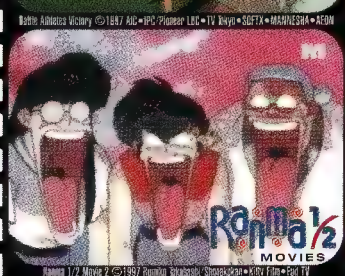
It's Time to Laugh!!



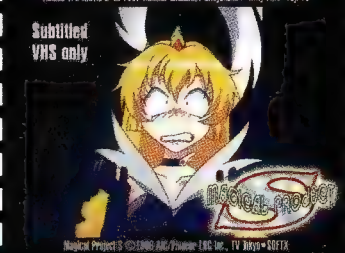
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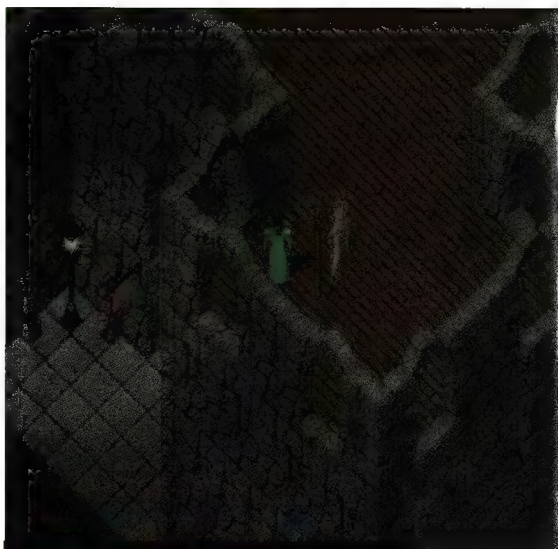
It's every gamer's dream come true—selling your roleplaying characters for big money. Now, *Ultima Online* is making it a reality.

Accounts from the popular online RPG are selling briskly on internet auction services like eBay (www.ebay.com). The flood of sales began after a player known as Turbohawk sold his account in March for \$521. It included five high-level characters and more than a half-million gold pieces. "This is the best game on earth and I wish I had the time to play," he wrote after the sale. "But I don't have time to play anymore."

That sale was dwarfed two weeks later when Michael Hanson sold his account for a whopping \$2,025! "It was worth more than that to me," Hanson said. "I've been playing since November of '97, but wanted more free time to play other games." His account included a half-dozen high-level characters—a grandmaster mage and blacksmith among them—plus a placed castle, a keep deed and more than 2.5 million gold pieces spread over several servers. Bidding on this account started at \$50. Most accounts offered on eBay start in the \$50-\$300 range. "

According to David Swofford, a spokesman for Origin Systems, the game's publisher: "We're thrilled and fascinated by the sales. It's unprecedented that people are paying real money for virtual real estate." Swofford believes most of the sales involve active players who've reached a plateau in the game they can't or don't have the time to get past. "Also, strategic real estate is hard to get in the real world and in *UO*. The only way to get things like castles in primo locations is to buy them," he said.

Ultima Online is set in the virtual fantasy world of Britannia and costs \$10 a month—plus the \$50 cost of the game—to play. In addition to the monetary investment required, *UO* is played in real time, and it takes months to build-up a character's skills and wealth. Because of these factors, *UO* accounts will likely be in high demand as the game continues to grow. *UO* pioneered pay-to-play massive online fantasy roleplaying and has reached 125,000 active accounts as of April '99. ■ Tom Slizewski



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION *Ultima Online's* virtual real estate is selling for big bucks.



BIG BUCKS \$2,000 will get you 2.5 million gold.

Ultima Online™ & © ORIGIN Systems.



We always give all kinds of cool inserts away each issue. The heaviest? The oversized Chaos Orb from issue #12. The smallest? The mini Jawa card from issue #49. The most expensive? The first *InQuest* board game, *Maelstorm*, at a whopping \$20,000.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

Race For Glory

MAGIC GRAND PRIXES A DASH FOR CASH

If you want to go to the big party, you gotta be invited. That's the way real life works and it's no different in the world of professional *Magic*.

And unless your name is on the "Top Guns" chart to the right of this article, you gotta earn an invitation. But that's not as tough as you may think. If you're serious about battling your way into the Pro Tour, your best bets are *Magic* Grand Prixes. Your chances of scoring a Pro Tour invitation at a Grand Prix are about as good as it gets, since the top eight players—instead of the top one or two at a Pro Tour Qualifier—get invites.

Even if you're not looking for an invitation, the cash prizes at a Grand Prix are worth the effort, with the top player netting \$2,400, and the other top 15 players splitting \$15,000; prizes are a bit smaller for Grand Prixes not held in the United States. And with 10 Grand Prixes scheduled so far in 1999—with more to be finalized later in the year—in eight different countries, sooner or later, one of these will take place near you.

Of course, the cash and Pro Tour invitations mean Grand Prixes are among the biggest *Magic* events; it takes two days of grueling play to determine the top players. And since players can also score Pro Tour points for doing well at a Grand Prix, many professional-level players attend and the competition is tough. On the up side, if one of the top eight players is already qualified for the Pro Tour, the invitations are passed down to the next non-invited player.

This past March saw two *Magic* Grand Prixes:

At GP Vienna, Austria, 350 players met at the Hofburg, a gorgeous 19th-century building in the historical city, to see who would bag the money and invitations. Emerging victorious was Kai Budde, the undisputed master of European Grand Prixes. He'd earlier won GP Barcelona, Spain, and come in second at GP Birmingham, England. In fact, he's the only player ever to win consecutive Grand Prixes. The most amazing thing about Budde isn't his Grand Prix successes, though, it's his humility. You'd think winning two major events would build some well-deserved pride in his ability. But *Magic* has taught him the foolishness of pride. "I'm the world's biggest scrub who keeps getting lucky at



KING OF KANSAS Brilliant sideboard strategy helped Mark Gordon win Grand Prix Kansas City.

GPs," he said. "After Vienna, I played a tournament using my winning Tide deck and lost every match!"

Closer to home was GP Kansas City, Kansas, the last opportunity to qualify for the next big Pro Tour in New York, the last weekend of April. More than 450 players showed up for this final opportunity to make it to the big time. Mark Gordon proved to be the man to beat. He took the top spot by deftly playing a basic Sligh deck. While his deck was fairly standard, his sideboard strategy was brilliant; in the last round of Swiss play, he used all 15 cards from his sideboard to defeat a "CounterSliver" deck—removing most of his creatures in exchange for Pyroblasts, which counter blue spells, and the legal maximum of four legal Anarchy, which buries white creatures. This allowed him to destroy all his opponent's dangerous white/blue Crystalline Slivers—the ones makes all slivers untargetable. These were key to his opponent's deck and removing them assured his victory. ■ *Rick Moscatello and Alex Shvartsman*

KAI BUDDE'S GP-VIENNA WINNING TIDE DECK

BLUE

- 2 Arcane Denial
- 1 Brainstorm
- 4 Counterspell
- 3 Frantic Search
- 4 Force Of Will
- 4 High Tide
- 4 Impulse
- 3 Merchant Scroll
- 1 Mystical Tutor
- 1 Palinchron
- 3 Stroke Of Genius
- 4 Time Spiral
- 3 Turnabout

LAND

- 3 Volcanic Island
- 16 Island
- 4 Thawing Glacier

SIDEBOARD

- 4 Hydroblast
- 1 Mountain
- 2 Null Rod
- 4 Ophidiars
- 4 Pyroblast



KEYS TO VICTORY These cards won the day for Kai Budde and Mark Gordon at GPs Austria and Kansas City, respectively.



Although we'd occasionally mention new games other than CCGs, *I/O* didn't start direct coverage of RPGs till issue #26, when we covered them in our favorite games of all time. We started with online computer game coverage almost two years later in issue #46.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

Magic: The Gathering is a registered trademark of Wizards of the Coast.

Big-time Magic 1999

Ready to try your hand at pro level *Magic*? Here's a rundown of the top events remaining in 1999. The next Grand Prix will be in Amsterdam, Netherlands, from May 15-16. After that, it's on to Washington D.C., June 18-20. Formats for these are undetermined. There will be several more GPs throughout

the year, but times and places aren't definite. Locations being considered are Memphis, Tennessee; Sydney, Australia; and Porto, Portugal.

You've likely just missed Pro Tour New York, held in Secaucus, New Jersey, April 30 through May 2. But you have plenty of time to qualify for the next PT, in Chicago, September 25-27. This will be Limited Booster Draft format and have the usual \$150,000 purse.

Before that will be national tournaments in most *Magic*-playing countries. In the U.S., the Nationals take place the 4th of July weekend at the Origins

convention in Columbus, Ohio. Rochester Draft format will be used. To get to play in the nationals, you must have a Standard/Limited DCI rating above 2,000—the exact number will be determined in May—or qualify at the convention prior to the Nationals starting.

The 1999 *Magic* season will wrap up with the World Championships, held in Yokohama, Japan. This six day event will test the endurance and skills the top *Magic* players in a wide variety of formats, and top players will split a quarter of a million bucks!

■ Rick Moscatello



TROPHY TRACK This summer's premiere *Magic* events.

TOP GUNS MAGIC SHARPSHOOTERS

WORLD'S 10 BEST MAGIC PLAYERS

1. **BRIAN SELDEN**, San Diego, CA, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2144
2. **DARWIN KASTLE**, Allston, MA, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2082
3. **SCOTT R. JOHNS**, Northridge, CA, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2069
4. **GARY KRAKOWER**, Toronto, ON, Canada
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2058

5. PLAYER OF THE MONTH

JON FINKEL, 20, from New Brunswick, NJ
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2055

JOB: None

FAVORITE MAGIC CARD? Ophidian

FAVORITE NON-MAGIC ACTIVITY?

Poker

NUMBER OF TIMES HE'S CHANGED

HAIR COLOR 2 (to red then blonde)

NICKNAME AS A CHILD: Fink

FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Buffy the Vampire Slayer"

BIO IN BRIEF: Finkel has been a consistent top performer on the Pro Tour, scoring in the top 32 of every single Pro Tour event in which he played last year, and was named 1998 Pro Tour Player of the Year. His biggest *Magic* win was at the third PT NY, where he won first place and \$25,000. His most recent near-win was at PT LA, where he came in second.



FINKEL

6. **MICHAEL LONG**, Charlottesville, VA, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2046
7. **ADAM D. VINCENT**, Longwood, FL, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2044
8. **MIKE BREGOLI**, Southwick, MA, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2040
9. **CHRISTOPH O'LEARY**, Malden, MA, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2038
10. **GLYEB G. KOUMASINSKI**, Columbia, MD, USA
DCI STANDARD RATING: 2047

MAGIC UPDATES RULE CHANGES AND OTHER TECHNICALITIES

GENERAL RULINGS

If two legendary permanents have different types (e.g. one is a creature, but the other has been affected by Soul

Sculptor), they are still subject to legend rules.

Under Fifth Edition rules, all lands have an implied "Play this ability as a mana source" tacked on to the end of each mana ability. Changing the permanent type of the land (for example, turning it into a creature) will not cause its mana source abilities to become instants.

Zuran Orb is unbanned in Type 1.5.

SPECIFIC CARD RULINGS

If an opponent plays Fertile Ground on your land, you choose the color of the additional mana when you tap the enchanted land for mana.

If you put Transmogrifying Lcid on an animated Mishra's Factory, the Lcid will fall off at end of turn. This reverses an earlier ruling that said the Factory would become a 1/1 artifact creature indefinitely.

If Mask of the Mimic or Remembrance instructs you to search for a Clone, you must search for the creature the Clone was last copying. The same applies to all other such "copy cards."

ERRATA

Booby Trap, Brink of Madness, Defense of the Heart, Hesitation, Impending Disaster, Mogg Bombers, Planar Collapse, and Second Chance should read, "sacrifice [this card] to [generate some effect]." For example, you can no longer use Second Chance's ability and still return the enchantment to your hand with Capsize.

Coming SOON

RELEASE OF THE MONTH

Shootout at High Noon

by Sean P. Fannon

CATEGORY: Collectible Card Game**FROM:** Five Rings Publishing**RELEASE:** May**COST:** \$9.99

THE GIST: Most people know that *InQuest Gamer* started out as a magazine primarily dedicated to collectible card games, and they're still a major love for everyone on the staff. As such, you gotta figure that any game that captures our imagination has got to be one of the best ever made; *Doomtown* is just such a game. *Doomtown: Shootout at High Noon* is your chance to jump on your horse, slap on your shootin' irons and ride into the fantasy/horror/Western town of Gomorra to make your fortune. Complete with two complete preconstructed decks, you and a sidekick can get down to business and join in all the fun without missing a step. No game does well if new players can't easily get involved, and this fully developed starter set is meant to make sure you can draw and flop with the best of them.

Newbies will find lots to love about this game. Not only is the story top draw and the characters cool beyond words, but the game play is the most unique and clever invented for the hobby. Anyone who knows how poker works will have an edge here, although it's still a very different game where strategy means more than luck. The right deck construction will mean a slick, fast game, but the wrong mix can mean the undertaker has yet another coffin to hammer together.

Although this is mainly a beginner set—100 cards of Law Dogs and Blackjacks—old hands will also find some of reason to grab this boxed set, since there are two cards totally unique to the box that you won't find in any boosters or other starters: experienced versions of Eddy Bellows and Corky Henderson. In other words, there isn't a *Doomtown* player, old or new, who will want to miss this *Shootout*.



SLAP LEATHER This introductory set will help new hombres get along.

Fred Fields has painted the most covers for *InQuest*—four including issue #10's voluptuous mummy, issue #21's evil Santa, issue #27's sand creatures and issue #35's werewolf. Seven others have painted two each—Stefano Baldo, Ed Beard, Brom, Clyde Caldwell, Larry Elmore, Anson Maddocks and Steve Stone.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS



Awakenings

CATEGORY: Collectible Card Game

FROM: Five Rings Publishing

RELEASE: June

COST: \$8.99 per starter, \$2.49

per booster

THE GIST: The world of *Legend of the Burning Sands* just got a lot more crowded. Not only are more people entering into the strange game of power and dominance, but now, there's a god about to wake up and smell the coffee. The underestimated, deceptively powerful Merchant's Guild has entered the fray with its vast resources and connections. And there's another group—less structured and more eclectic than the others—hell-bent on waking Lord Moon for its own nefarious purposes. Night in the desert is filled with new dangers, and those that sleep through it might wake up to find a knives at their throats.

Clanbook: Salubri

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game

FROM: White Wolf Studios

RELEASE: June

COST: \$12

THE GIST: Can't we all just get along? Apparently not, as the upstart Tremere continue their war of genocide against the only Kindred clan capable of actually healing anyone. With their founder, Saulot, dead and most of his followers having joined him in oblivion, the few that remain have, from necessity, turned from healers to warriors just to survive. Find out how this new direction changes them, as well as the many secrets they bear away from the hungry and ambitious who hunt them. This clanbook for the *Vampire: The Dark Ages* may be the most important as an entire clan faces annihilation. Why do they face this danger alone?

Corporate Download Sourcebook

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game

FROM: FASA Corporation

RELEASE: May

COST: \$20

THE GIST: Hostile takeovers in the world of *Shadowrun* tend to have high body counts and massive property damage. Entire financial empires can rise and fall in the aftermath of a corporate war, and the nastiest one to date finally ended after two years. Find out who's on top, who's buried and where your runner fits into it all with this complete overview of the new face of corporate America. The war may be over, but there are whole new battles to be fought, and it's guys like you who'll be waging them. Whose creds are you gonna snag, and what will you have to do to get them?

Grim Crusade

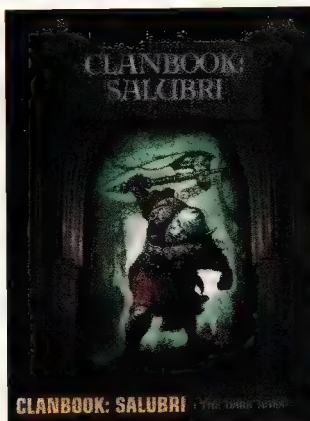
CATEGORY: Miniatures Game

FROM: Pinnacle Entertainment

RELEASE: May

COST: \$74.95

THE GIST: Toy soldiers were never like this! Undead



gunslingers and mad scientists with steam-powered flame-throwers blow each other away in this highly anticipated boxed set. Featuring the latest and greatest version of the award-winning *Rail Wars* rules, with all the extra stuff in one place, this is the ultimate starting point for anyone wanting to get in on the fun. The Pinnacle dudes love their toys too, and you'll find lots of miniatures, chips, cards and dice—as well as a mess of cardboard buildings your little guys can tear up and blow apart. Slap leather, saddle up and keep yer head down, partner.

GURPS Who's Who Guide #1

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game

FROM: Steve Jackson Games

RELEASE: May

COST: \$19.95

THE GIST: *GURPS* has long provided us with game stats for everything cool and interesting in the universe—and a lot of stuff from lots of other universes too—and this supplement is no exception. Another excellent addition to any gamer's library, this is a collection of 52 of the most interesting and odd individuals in history. Personal histories, notable facts and wicked speculations accompany actual game statistics, making this a useful reference as well as a game sourcebook for almost any kind of campaign. Just how bad was Genghis Khan? There was a real Dread Pirate Roberts outside "The Princess Bride"? Time to find out.

Jungle

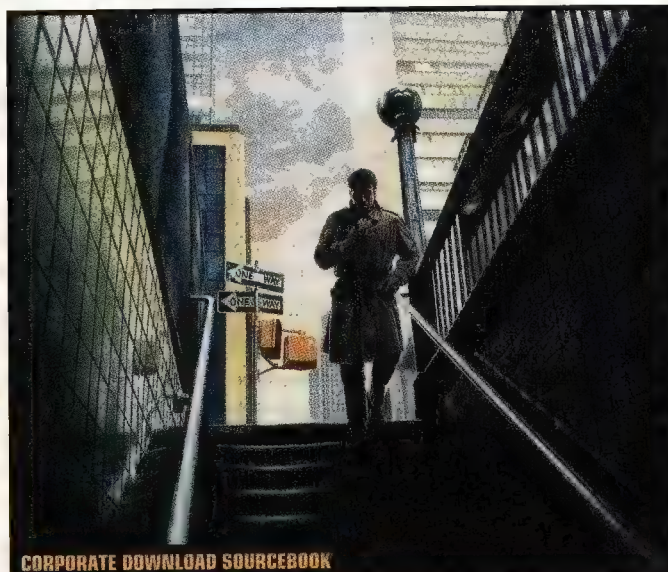
CATEGORY: Collectible Card Game

FROM: Wizards of the Coast

RELEASE: June

COST: \$9.99 per preconstructed deck, \$2.99 per booster

THE GIST: Hey, what are all these kids playing, anyway? It's called *Pokémon*, dude, and it's taking the collectible card game hobby by storm. Descended directly from the hit Game Boy game, you put together teams of your own monsters to do battle with whatever gang someone else wants to bring to the table. Simple,



CORPORATE DOWNLOAD SOURCEBOOK

Corporate Download Sourcebook™ & FASA Clanbook Sourcebook™ & White Wolf



but scads fun! This expansion features 48 new cards—among them, some ultra-rare holographic cards that feature major cool “super-attacks.” Collectors will be clawing at the doors for this one, and the neighbor’s kids will whip your tail if you’re not ready, so be wary of yellow mice that give electrical shocks.

Legacy of the Forge

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game
FROM: Alderac Entertainment Group
RELEASE: June
COST: \$9.95

THE GIST: The right hand of the Emperor has long stood for honor and victory on the battlefield. Unfortunately, the enduring pride of the Lion is also its greatest flaw and threat, ever ready to tear the clan asunder from the inside as the families vie for triumph in an effort to prove who has the greatest honor. This adventure thrusts your *Legend of the Five Rings* characters into an intrigue-filled story where diplomacy is barely able to contain the fury of the wounded Lion clan and an empire-wide war looms on the horizon. Newly expanded rules for mass combat and the concept of bushido on the Rokugani battlefield play a pivotal role in the conflict.

Monsters, Muties & Misfits

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game
FROM: Pinnacle Entertainment
RELEASE: May
COST: \$20

THE GIST: The wastelands of *Deadlands: Hell on Earth* are more dangerous than Friday afternoon traffic in Los Angeles, and this book contains the rundown on the nasty varmints that inhabit them. Everything from the slightly altered cybernetic battlehounds to the truly bizarre self-replicating bonebots can be found in the deserts that make up most of the world, which means there is no such thing as “too much ammunition.” No marshall should go without this book, as it gives you all you need to plot the ugly and radiation-scarred demise of your posse. Oops, did we say that out loud?

Return to the Keep on the Borderlands

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game
FROM: TSR
RELEASE: June
COST: \$12.95

THE GIST: The first *Dungeons & Dragons* game I ever played had us stomping through this, the most famous beginning adventure in roleplaying history. TSR finally closes the circle with a complete update and expansion on many players’ favorite dungeon of all time, originally created by the godfather himself, Gary Gygax. It’s the Silver Anniversary, and the old Keep gets a face lift and whole new dangers to deal with. Updated to current *AD&D* rules and fleshed out with more adventure and excitement, this is one nostalgia run you can’t afford to miss. Even better, it’s still a fantastic starting point for a new campaign. For a sneak peek, check out this issue’s *Warriors of the Gray Queen* adventure module booklet which serves as a prequel to the *Return to the Keep on the Borderlands*.

Siege of the Sleeping Mountain

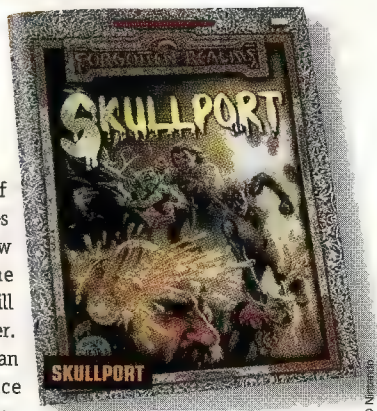
CATEGORY: Collectible Card Game
FROM: Five Rings Publishing
RELEASE: May
COST: \$9.99

THE GIST: One of the most exciting CCGs since *Magic: The Gathering*, *Legend of the Five Rings* has captivated thousands of players around the world with its character-driven game-play, elegant rules and ever-expanding storyline. Official tournaments actually decide the fates of characters and even entire clans, letting the fans impact the future of their own game. You can get in on this wonderful community with this beginner-oriented boxed set, which features two preconstructed decks, revised and easy-to-follow rules and brand-new cards— including some exclusives. Glory to the Empire... and Bayushi Kachiko’s string bikini.

Skullport

CATEGORY: Role-
 playing Game
FROM: TSR
RELEASE: June
COST: \$18.95

THE GIST: The city of thieves called Skullport lives and breathes right below Waterdeep, with all the sights and sounds that will cause you fear and wonder. Described as a “subterranean Casablanca,” this place defines the term black market “underground” where people come to procure the obscure and accomplish those acts which fall under the gray areas of the law. Good and evil put friction aside here; everyone gets by as they can in a place with its own rules and way of life. As unique a place as Waterdeep is, this is 10 times moreso and a thousand times darker, so be careful not to tread its underground passages lightly. You could lose more than your wallet or you could lose your soul!



Skullport is a trademark of TSR. Pinnacles is a trademark of Pinnacle Entertainment Group.



50 issues later, only four columns from our premiere issue are still around: Inquisition, Killer Decks, Swan Song and, despite a 20-month absence from June '97 to December '98, Card Stock.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

The Mountains of Madness

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game

FROM: Chaosium Games

RELEASE: June

COST: \$29.95

THE GIST: Nothing like the frozen wastelands of Antarctica to really drive you loopy! This epic *Call of Cthulhu* campaign that picks up where the classic Lovecraftian tale, "At the Mountains of Madness," left off. Miskatonic University is funding a more elaborate and better-equipped expedition to find out what happened to those poor souls that went before, as well as the mysteries that drove them to the end of the Earth. Set in the 1930s, this is pulp-era exploration and adventure with the kind of twist you can only find when elder nightmares are involved. Grab your earmuffs and beware of snow blindness!



ultimate fantasy game world map. The original still adorns many a gamer's walls, and now we have the map we've been waiting for ever since Greyhawk came alive again. At a wall-spanning 60" by 44", this is the largest map TSR has ever published, and it has everything. Every major road, boundary, geographical feature, man-made fixture and all the cool bits that make Greyhawk the most famous game world in the hobby are here. No Greyhawk GM, player or gaming fan will want to be without this.

Worms!

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game

FROM: Pinnacle Entertainment

RELEASE: May

COST: \$9.95

THE GIST: The *Deadlands* dime novels are cool combinations of fiction and game adventure, giving you a helluva good read as well as some excellent gaming material to use on your own posse. This one features Ronan Lynch, an undead gunslinger who just can't seem to quit the hero business, and his long-time pal Hank "One-Eye" Ketchum, a Texas Ranger who's too ornery to be afraid of anything. Mojave rattlers—think, big, BIG snakes—are harassing a town the two passing through, and when you cross these rascals with the bizarre, things can only go downhill for the peace-loving folk. Get the real deal on how things work in the Weird West.

Urza's Destiny

CATEGORY: Collectible Card Game

FROM: Wizards of the Coast

RELEASE: June

COST: \$9.99 per preconstructed deck, \$2.99 per booster

THE GIST: Those nasty Phyrexians have met their match in the ancient planeswalker we all know and love, Urza. In one of the most successful story-arcs in *Magic: The Gathering's* history, we've watched Urza span the whole of Dominaria as he struggles to save his chosen lands from their evil threat. New preconstructed decks include a "Battle Surge" control deck, "Enchanter," heavy on blue creatures and enchantments, the black weenie "Assassin" deck and "Fiendish Nature" with its big green creatures and graveyard manipulation.

Sean Fannon's destiny is to go on a grim crusade to awaken the sleeping mountains of madness.

Werewolf: The Dark Ages

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game

FROM: White Wolf Studios

RELEASE: June

COST: \$21.95

THE GIST: So, there you were, the dread dark lord, living the high life in your gloomy castle as the peasants meekly served your every whim and comely lasses from the village kept the ol' blood flowing just for you. Suddenly, this huge dog barges onto the scene, stirs the peasants into a frenzy and eats your best ghouls! Even in the heyday of vampire dominance, the werewolves run free and wild in this supplement designed to bring *Apocalypse* players into the Dark Ages. Find out what tribes are running where, how the Garou rule Man and what the battlefield looks like in the bad old days in this supplement for *Vampire* and *Werewolf* players alike.



World of Greyhawk Campaign Map

CATEGORY: Roleplaying Game

FROM: TSR

RELEASE: June

COST: \$9.95

THE GIST: The "Great One" returns—the



In the first few issues of *InQuest*, the *Magic Players Guide* and *Price Guide* were one entity; card prices were listed along with their complete text and abilities. In issue #4, the guides were split, and the *Players Guide* was sorted by card type instead of set to make reference easier.



TOAMERSO

JEFF VS. THE WORLD

ONE INQUEST GAMER EDITOR MAKES THE ULTIMATE MAGIC: THE GATHERING CHALLENGE

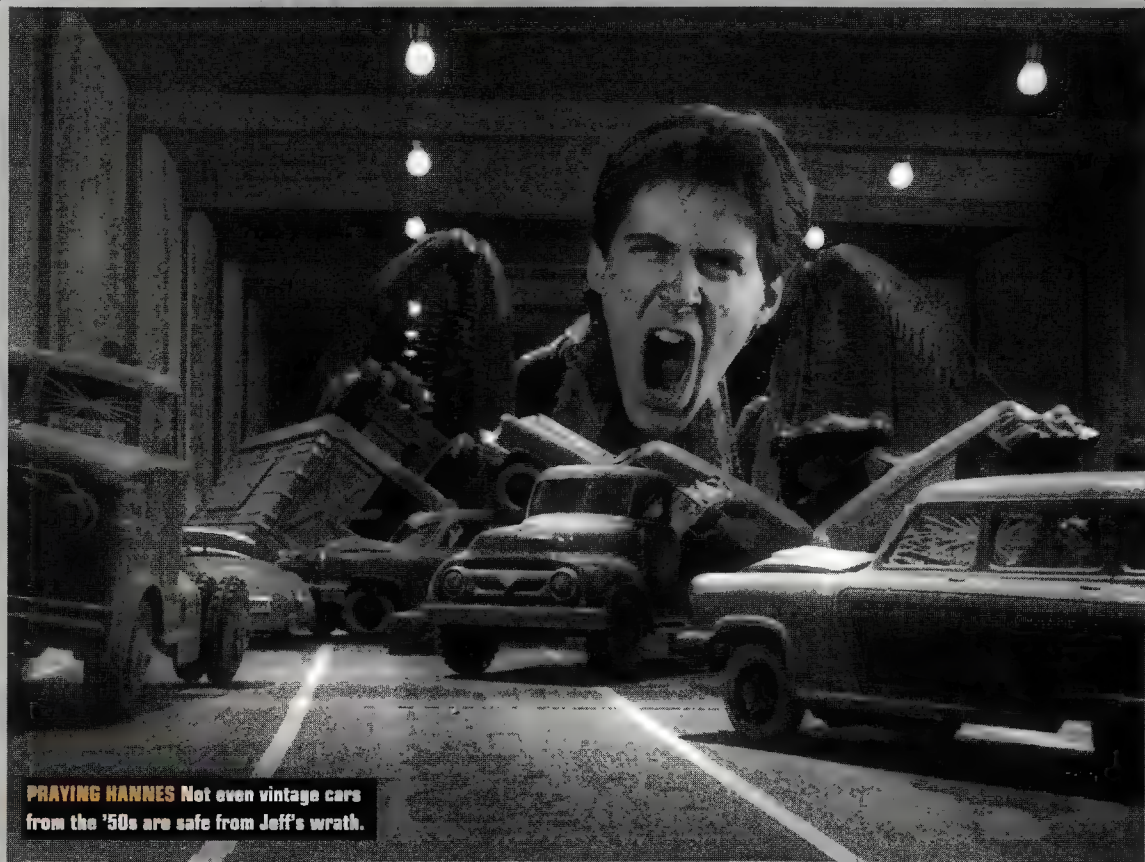
And the gauntlet was thrown.

Games Editor Jeff Hannes—known as much for his mouth as his prowess at gaming—offhandedly commented during lunch that not only could he beat any *IQ* staffer in *Magic*, he could beat all of us. At once. Not a team to pass up an opportunity to humiliate a co-worker, the *IQ* staff all took up arms to deflate the otherworldly ego that is...*(cue reverb effect)* Jeff Hannes!

BY THE IQ GAMER STAFF

MIGHTY JEFF YOUNG Horrible monster Jeff Hannes terrorizes the *IQ* staff (l. to r.): Mike Searle, Brent Fishbaugh, Tom Slizewski and Paul Sudlow.

Opening photo "King Kong" courtesy of Foto Feritas.es
Headshots Paul Gehrelet.



PRAYING HANNES Not even vintage cars from the '50s are safe from Jeff's wrath.

THE RULES

Jeff can build a 60-card deck using any cards he wants, though he can only use one of any restricted card and no banned cards. The other four guys—seeing how it is a four-on-one slobber knocker—can only use cards that are the lowest of the low, cards which have a one-star rating in the *IQ Gamer Players Guide* (meaning they suck more than a White House intern).

IT BEGINS (NOON)

After everyone gets an hour to build a deck and it's democratically voted on as to who goes first (it was 4-1, Jeff goes last), Tom begins the showdown by playing a Mountain and casting Goblin Digging Team. In the slim chance Jeff was high on peyote while constructing his deck and actually has some walls in there, Tom's got his number.

The rest of turn one sees Brent drop a Plains and a Miracle Worker (we don't know what it does either), Mike drop a Swamp, Paul a Forest and Jeff a Black Lotus, three Moxes and an Erhnam Djinn. This game already blows.

FIRST BLOOD (12:15)

Mike's dead, Tom's at 14 life, Brent's at 18 and Paul still hasn't cast anything yet.

As Jeff sits back in his chair and smiles a smile so smug Ted Turner would call him arrogant, we wonder how it is that some players manage to separate their personal feelings from something that's "just a game" (read: we are *so* keying his car after this).

SUMMONING SICKNESS (12:30)

We've killed Jeff's stupid Erhnam Djinn, but not before it brought Paul down to 16 life. The momentum seems to turn as a veritable tide of seldom-seen, undeniably worthless *Magic* creatures sit across the table from Jeff: a Kobold Taskmaster, Carrier Pigeons, a Marble Priest, Arctic Foxes, something called "Torsten Von Ursus," a Giant Turtle, a Water Wurm, Osai Vultures and Spreading Algae (which is really an enchantment, but what Jeff doesn't know can't hurt him... much).

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

(12:49)

After we actually hit Jeff for some damage, he casts Congregate followed by Wrath of God. Now with a little under 40 life, Jeff casts Time Walk and plays an Elvish Archer, a Pegasus Charger and a

Youthful Knight. We take this time to point out how truly unfun the game has been up until this point and how if Jeff truly cared about our feelings—his friends and colleagues—he'd concede the game now and go pick us up some sandwiches. It doesn't work and we're forced to continue this farce.

HOPE BLOSSOMS (1:00)

As Jeff's delightful first-strike creatures whittle everyone down to single-digit life, Tom plays two, count 'em—*two*—Oath of Mages. As the black grip of despair is lifted from our lil' gamer hearts, Jeff pisses all over our parade by Disenchanted both of 'em. Ignoring our inquiries as to the truth behind his lineage, Jeff Swords to Plowshares his own Elvish Archer to get his life total to 40 "just because he can." We take another vote and in a similar 4-1 decision, name him the most annoying *Magic* player ever in the history of ever.

GUINNESS CALLS (1:13)

Time seems to stand still as—for the first time since the fall of 1994—a Homarid is brought into play.



Only three games have been dreadful enough to warrant a rating of 1, the lowest "honor": *InQuest* reviewers are allowed to bestow. They are, in equal order of crappiness, *Dr. Who*, *J.E.D.* and *SuperDeck!* Believe it or not, *Spellfire* received a 3.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

JAUNTY JINGLES (1:20)

Jeff, who's all but tuned-out the jingle we've written about him while he analyzes his every move for like an hour ("Woody Allen has an ex-wife, the lady's name is Mia, we hope Jeff joins the Navy and catches gonorrhhea"), casts Regrowth on his Time Walk, recasts and then follows it with a Time Spiral. Somewhere in all this Jeff kills Paul and brings a Serra Angel into play.

THE SHOWSTOPPER (1:35)

Tom plays a Mountain.

PHILOSOPHY 101 (1:37)

Jeff sends his creatures into battle in an all-out blitz, only to have Brent cast Holy Day, the white equivalent of the combat-stopping Fog! Whoohoo! We take this time out to remind Jeff what Sun Tzu, the great Chinese philosopher of 4,000 B.C., said about *Magic: The Gathering* play strategy: "It is not how the soldier carries his sword that wins the battle, but rather how he carries Jeff's momma." We all giggle like small schoolgirls while Jeff just gives us this weird glassy-eyed stare. He's probably wondering if Sun Tzu really knew his mom.

HOPE BLOSSOMS, THE SEQUEL (1:51)

Not only have we managed to kill most of Jeff's creatures, but Tom has another

Oath of Mages out and Brent's got an Akron Legionnaire—an 8/4 creature—standing guard! While both of their life combined barely hover over 10, it looks like the tide might yet swing back to "the good guys" (*Editor's Note: That makes Jeff "the bad guy"*). Shame that Jeff's still at 32 life. We raise the stakes as Brent casts an Arcum's Weathervane and starts turning Jeff's land snow-covered, followed by a Cold Snap (which, coincidentally enough, does a point of damage for every snow-covered land a player has. That's called a "combo."). To finish out the turn, Tom casts a Mishra's Groundbreaker. Way to end on a high note.

BREAK OUT THE KEG! (2:10)

Jeff, down to *GASP!* a measly 29 life,

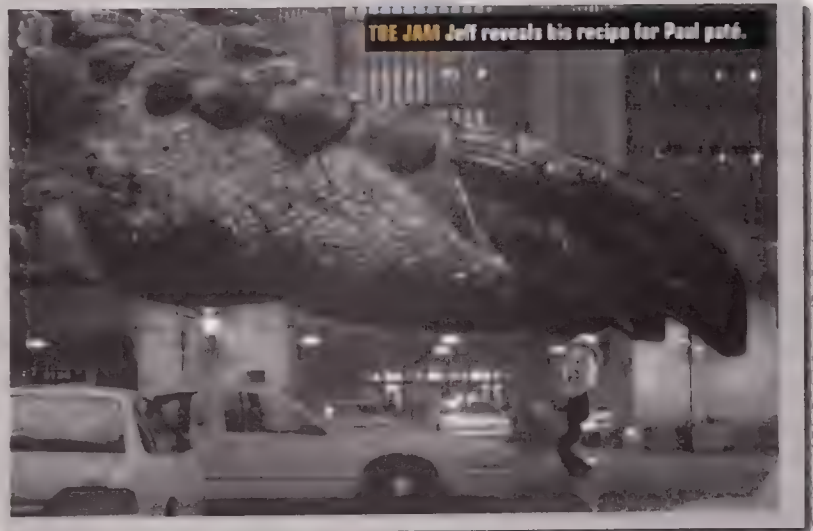
Disenchants the Oath of Mages, casts Ancestral Recall and then plays two Moxes and a Sol Ring. To round off his "look at my fancy cards" turn, he pats all his artifact mana lovingly and casts Manabarbs... only to have Tom cast Abjure and sacrifice the still-breathing Homarid! Whoohoo! As Jeff rolls his eyes and drops the Manabarbs in the graveyard, Brent and Tom high-five and dance as well as two white D&D fans can.

INTERLUDE (2:18)

Still dancing.

WHITE MEN CAN'T FLIP (2:21)

Tom casts a Chaos Orb! Well...it's really just a Falling Star, the poor man's Orb, but



TOE JAM Jeff reveals his recipe for Paul pâté.

Location photo © Tolo Co. Ltd. Courtesy of Foto Fanzines

JEFF vs. IQ GAMER staff

DECK FEATURE	JEFF'S DECK	THE REST OF US
Best Creature	Multani, Maro Sorcerer. Can be a face-smashing, deck-trashing 33/33 by the second turn.	Dwarven Pony. Its scraggly ass gives slow-motion pony rides—oh, and dwarves get mountainwalk.
Most Powerful Combo	Time Spiral/Regrowth. Draw seven new cards and play a whole bunch of things in the same turn, like a Black Lotus, Erhnam Djinn, Serra Angel. Then repeat all over again.	Mountain/Mons's Goblin Raiders. Yeah, baby! Now we're cookin'!
Best Spell	Ancestral Recall. Three cards for one blue mana. Wow!	Marsh Gas. A crappy instant, or the foul-smelling odor coming from our inept black deck.
Meanest Trick	Manabarbs/Moxes. Every mana tapped gradually kills opponents; Jeff stays unharmed with power artifact mana.	Mana Clash/Lucky Coin. Keep flipping and hope that 20 tails come up in a row to kill opponent.
Damage Dealt by Turn Five	42 points. Two opponents dead. One praying for a Wood Elemental.	Depends. To opponent: zilch. To ourselves...

THE WORST DECK IMAGINABLE

This winner here's got big creatures, direct damage, discard, land destruction, countering, life gaining—and it still sucks. The worst deck in the world might be 59 Swamps and a Zephyr Falcon, but the worst playable deck might be this one. Get out your Aisling Leprechauns as speed bumps, protect yourself with Quagmire and hope to last long enough to cast one of your big guns like the Infernal Denizen—of course, that might even be worse. Heck, we don't have any strategy for you; we don't even recommend you play it.

BIG GUNS: The four bad boys in your deck—Black Carriage, Elder Spawn, Infernal Denizen and the Wood Elemental—can do some damage... unfortunately, they usually do more damage to you. The Wood Elemental destroys your Forests, the Black Carriage sacrifices your creatures and the Elder Spawn eats your Islands and eventually kills you. Don't play it unless you're desperate.

VERSATILITY: Kudzu is a land-destruction spell that might never work. Rakalite can net you life—for an exorbitant cost. Phyrexian Tribute and Tendrils of Despair can screw with your opponent—if you sac creatures. Force Void can counter a spell, maybe, but it's so darn expensive. All are the worst spells of their type. Good luck.



when crap's all you got to work with, don't complain about the smell. Eyeing the two remaining first strike creatures Jeff has left, Tom drops the card from the required height, watches it flip 360° and... land harmlessly on Jeff's 3-D Doritos. The turn's not a total loss as Tom casts Web on the Akron Legionnaire and Brent proclaims the 3-D Doritos "spoils of war" and devours them. The Falling Star is then deemed a casualty of war and presumed lost (and digested) in the feeding frenzy.

BAMMO! (2:37)

As Jeff casts his Black Lotus a second time thanks to the Time Spiral, Tom fulfills the dreams of non Lotus-owners everywhere when he counters it with an Artifact Blast.

WHY WE WON'T GIVE UP OUR DAY JOB (2:55)

Another all-out blitz from Darth Jeff brings Tom to two life and Brent to one. We take this opportunity to add a second verse to our Jeff Anthem: "His privates will wither and fall, he'll sing like a soprano, then our dreams will all come true and he'll be crushed by a piano." He tries to point out that our iambic pentameter is way off, but we just sing louder.

THE SHOWDOWN (3:00)

What happens next may well be our finest hour or will sow the seeds for Jeff-gloating for millennia to come. After carefully hoarding cards and waiting for just the right time, the trap is sprung! First, Tom drops a Tangle Kelp on Jeff's last remaining untapped creature: his Serra. Then, giving Brent the Vulcan high-sign, Tom Eternal Flames, hitting Jeff for nine points of damage and bringing him to 15 life... but also smashing Tom for seven points.

After some quick math, it seems Tom—who's at two life—is dead and it's up to Brent to polish off the evil that is Jeff.

The first of his two-part attack? The long-idle Akron Legionnaire, who brings Jeff down to seven life...SEVEN! And the final all-or-nothing play? Mana Clash! It all comes down to the most fickle of women (and that's saying something): Lady Luck. As the two remaining combatants lean in towards one-another, thumbs itching for the fateful flipping where whomever scores a "tails" gets stung for a point, a hush falls over those who had long since exited the game. All their hopes, all their dreams... it all comes down to what happens in the next 60 seconds. Brent—at one life—can't afford to lose a single toss. Jeff—at seven life—seems almost a sure-thing. The first toss: Brent. Wiping the sweat from his brow and licking his dry lips, the coin is tossed: tails. Jeff wins.

THE MORAL (3:16)

Well, as much as after-school specials might tell you different, the rich kid with the better stuff usually wins. And yeah, that applies to *Magic* too. So while you and your friends might not be able to beat the annoying kid whose lawyer mom bought him a Lotus and a set of Moxes, odds are you could gang up and kick his ass in real life.

God knows it worked after we finished writing this article. 🌐

The InQuest Gamer staff strongly recommends you don't go around beating up rich kids whose moms are lawyers just on our say so. Thanks, but we can do without the lawsuits.

ARTIFACTS

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Arcum's Weathervane | 1 Rakalite (god help us) |
| 2 Goblin Lyre | 1 Ring Of Immortals |
| 1 Jangling Automaton | |

BLACK

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 Black Carriage | 1 Phyrexian Tribute |
| 1 Infernal Denizen | 1 Quagmire |
| 2 Krovikan Plague | 1 Tendrils of Despair |
| 1 Marsh Gas | 1 Wall of Tombstones |

BLUE

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1 Elder Spawn | 1 Foresight |
| 2 Force Void | 2 Water Wurm |

GREEN

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 2 Aisling Leprechaun | 1 Savaen Elves |
| 2 Gorilla Pack | 2 Shelkin Brownie |
| 2 Ichneumon Druid | 1 Wall of Wood |
| 2 Kudzu | 1 Wood Elemental |
| 1 Natural Selection | |

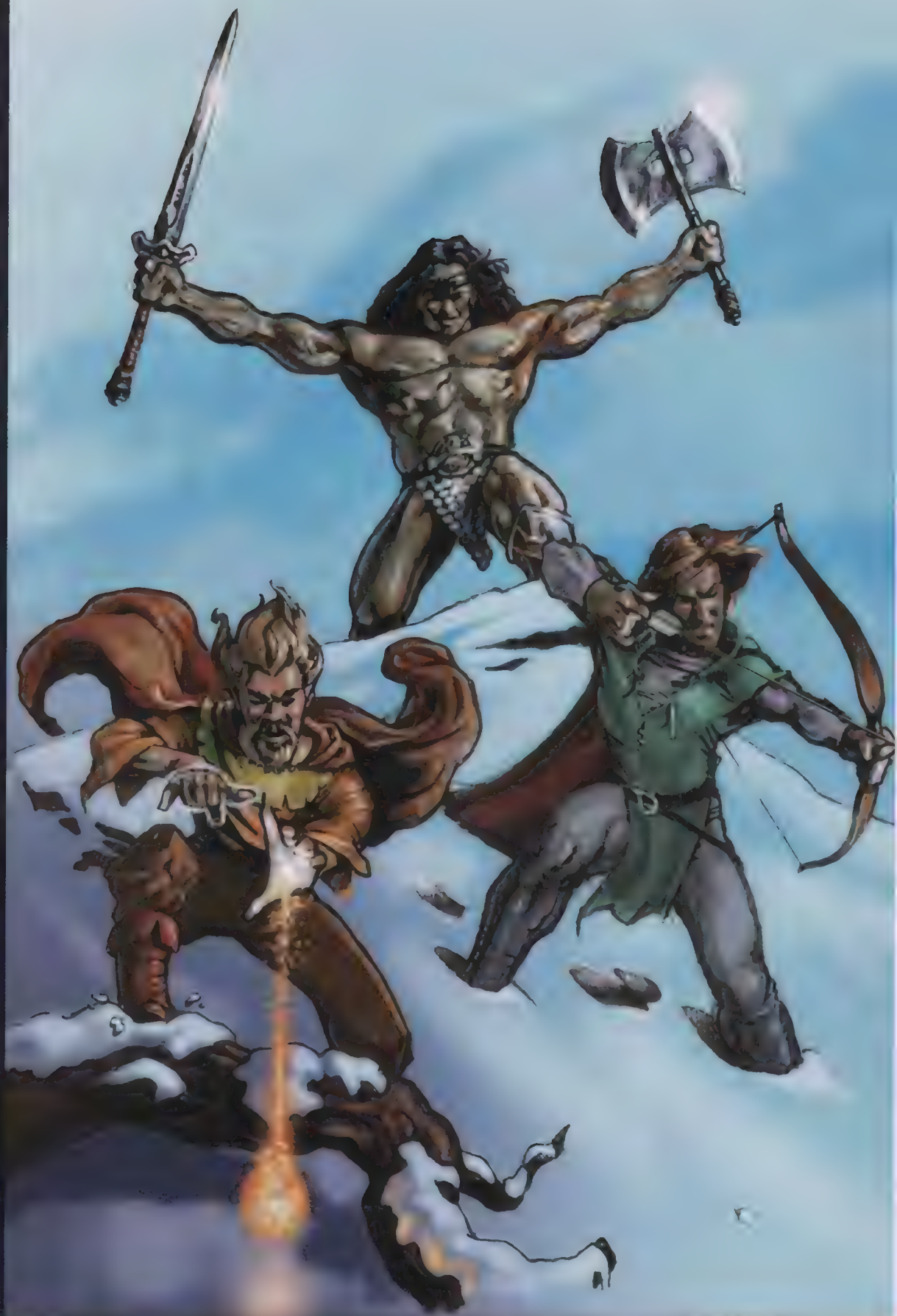
LAND

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Adventurers' Guildhouse | 1 Phyrexian Tower |
| 9 Forest | 1 Sorrow's Path |
| 5 Island | 7 Swamp |



Get ink? 2,154 pounds of the colored goo are used to print the full run of every issue.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS



FANTASTIC FOUR

**IQ Gamer recruits
the ultimate RPG
dream team**

Who are the greatest heroes of all time? For 40 days and 40 nights we set out to answer this question, scouring the realms of heroic literature and fantasy in search of the world's greatest adventuring party. We wanted a fighter, a mage, a healer and a thief who, between them, could eat balrogs for breakfast.

And we found them.

They're the best of the best—but they ain't all sheer power. They're human-scale heroes who will work as a team. Loners like Michael Moorcock's Elric of Melniboné didn't make the list. Elric may be powerful, but it only takes an "accidental" nick from his life-sucking sword Stormbringer to schlurp one of the home team's souls. The heroes that make up this party don't have any of those hang-ups.

So who made the final cut? Who makes up the ultimate roleplaying party? Let's sort through all our recruits and see. Drum roll, please...

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME No mission's impossible if you're playing this perfect party.

The FIGHTER



Lancelot du Lak could have been a contender. Even more than his liege King Arthur, Lancelot is the ultimate knight. He literally wins fights with one hand tied behind his back. But his love for Guinevere destroys the Round Table, and at other times drives him mad. He's way too intense, and his "I'll take you all on" approach isn't always the best tactic. He'd be a good diversion, but he's not our party-hearty warrior.

Beowulf, the Norse hero in the old English poem of the same name, gets the boot for the same reason. He's strong; if you want someone to rip trolls' arms off or battle dragons one on one, Beowulf's your man. But if you want subtlety, forget it. Beowulf's got a mean streak, too; he crushes his enemies to death with his bare hands.

How about Xena? She's a one-woman whirlwind and knows enough acrobatic moves for the cheesiest Hong Kong movie. However, she loses out because her grasp of strategy isn't as good as our ultimate fighter.

Who else came close? Other possibilities included Elric (too dangerous), Corwin of Amber (more god than human) and the Greek warrior Achilles (too arrogant).

When it all comes down to it, however, who better to guard your back in a fight than Conan? Strong, fast, tough and ferocious, Conan can take names with any weapon—even a dagger—and he's equal to any challenge. If something can hurt him, he reasons, then he can hurt it back; and he will, even if it means whacking that demon with a silver candlestick instead of a sword. Conan isn't just a slugger, though. He's charismatic and canny enough to become king. He's also been a thief, which lets him sidestep the front-gate approach favored by bull-by-the-horns heroes. His main hang-up is that he doesn't like wizards, so his relationship with the party's mage is going to be one of cool cooperation rather than friendship. He'd want to be in charge too, but mutual respect for the others in the party would allow co-leadership. This guy is everything you want in your party's number one tough guy.

CONAN

15TH LEVEL FIGHTER/5TH LEVEL THIEF • HUMAN, AGE 30

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Neutral

ABILITIES: S18(97) D18 Co18 I12 W14 Ch16

THACO (basic): 6, **ATTACKS:** 5/2*

ARMOR CLASS: 1 (chainmail), **HIT POINTS:** 120

NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES: blind-fighting, direction sense 15, endurance 18, jumping 18, modern languages 12, mountaineering, navigation 10, riding land-based 14, running 14, survival 13, swimming 18, tumbling 18

WEAPON PROFICIENCIES: broadsword (*specialized), dagger, knife, hand ax, bastard sword, battle ax, two-handed sword, spear, club

THIEF SKILLS: PP 25%, OL 25%, F/RT 10%, MS 75%, HS 70%, DN 50%, CW 95%, RL 0%, Backstab x 3

DESCRIPTION: This is Conan mid-way between his appearance as a 16-year-old thief in *The Tower of the Elephant* in Zamora and his usurpation of the throne of Aquilonia, at about 40. He is still a competent thief—excelling at climb walls, and great at hiding in shadows and moving silently, though less good at picking locks, as he tends to just hack through them with his sword. But by now, he's an awesome warrior, proficient with a wide variety of weapons and brutally efficient with the broadsword. In theory, as a dual-classed thief/fighter, Conan shouldn't have percentile strength, but he's the warrior that breaks the mold. He doesn't have 18(00) strength as he does meet the occasional warrior stronger than himself. Our Conan usually wears a mail shirt; he often wears less, but will use whatever armor is suitable for his situation.

The write staff. Counting staffers and freelancers, but not fake authors like Eugene T. Dudley, 174 different scribes have graced these pages.



ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

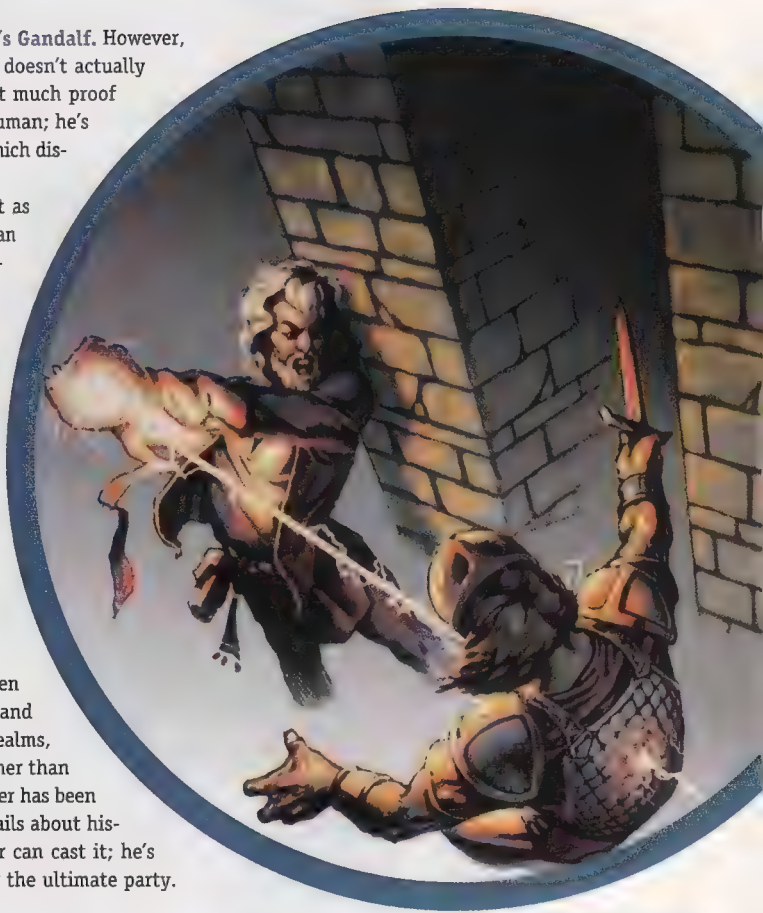
The MAGE

When you think wizard, you might think Tolkien's Gandalf. However, the big G didn't make the cut, primarily because he doesn't actually do much magic. We're told he's tough but there isn't much proof in the form of fire-power. Also, Gandalf isn't really human; he's a Maiar spirit doing a caretaker job on Middle-earth, which disqualifies him from joining the team.

Arthurian Legends' Merlin almost made it. He's not as powerful as our party's mage, though, and he's darker than most modern tales make him. While he's capable of moving the multi-ton rocks of Stonehenge by magic, Merlin's often a bit fickle and doesn't necessarily help out when he's needed. In *Le Morte D'Arthur*, he turns up when the damsel is already dead. Merlin's a wild card, too chancy—or just plain mad—to trust.

Raistlin from the "Dragonlance" series is even more untrustworthy. He's got an arsenal of spells, but there's no guarantee he'll cast them to help you. You'd be better off depending on Middle-earth's traitorous Saruman than Raistlin. In that same vein, Rand from Robert Jordan's "Wheel of Time" doesn't get in despite his immense powers; his growing insanity makes him just too darn dangerous to anyone and everyone.

Forget benign old men in battered pointy hats: When you're picking the ultimate mage, you want power and lots of it. Elminster, the archmage of the Forgotten Realms, has it in spades. We've gone for a younger version rather than the curmudgeonly old mage, but even a young Elminster has been around the block a lot. He already knows endless details about history, spells and monster lore. You name it, Elminster can cast it; he's the supreme tank mage and heavy magic artillery for the ultimate party.



ELMINSTER

18TH LEVEL MAGE • HUMAN, AGE 52

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Good

ABILITIES: D13 D18 Co14 M8 W18 Ch12

THAC0 (MAG): 15, **ATTACK:** 1, **ARMOR CLASS:** 3, **HP POINTS:** 80

NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES: Even at this stage in his career, Elminster can be assumed to be proficient in almost everything—certainly all wizard and priest proficiencies and all the useful general ones as well.

WEAPON PROFICIENCIES: staff, dagger, dart

SKILLS MEMORIZED:

- 1st: burning hands, charm person, color spray, magic missile, shield
- 2nd: forget, hypnotic pattern, levitate, mirror image, ray of exhaustion
- 3rd: fireball, fly, protection from normal missiles, slow, suggestion
- 4th: charm monster, confusion, mirror globe of invulnerability, polymorph self, stonekin
- 5th: Bigby's interposing hand, dismissal, hold monster, passwall, teleport
- 6th: disintegrate, legend lore, mass suggestion
- 7th: limited wish, power word stun, prismatic spray
- 8th: Bigby's clenched fist, mind blank, prismatic wall
- 9th: meteor swarm

MAGIC ITEMS: Necklace of missiles, ring of protection +3, ring of regeneration, staff of striking

DESCRIPTION: At his peak, Elminster is a 29th level mage; this is a younger Elminster. He's not yet the chosen of Mystara, so doesn't get any bonus spells or special abilities; he's just a regular 18th level mage. He has access to other spells, of course. With a story for any occasion, Elminster revels in acting out different roles across the Forgotten Realms: trickster, sage, hermit, diplomat, whatever the situation calls for. Elminster still has more hit points than a single-classed 18th level mage could have, though, since he's been many classes, including fighter and thief, in his lifetime.

Love those lists. There have been 118 "Top 10" lists in the first 50 issues of *InQuest*.



ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

The HEALER



Elrond might be the best healer in Middle-earth; it's Elrond, after all, that cures Frodo's deadly Nazgûl knife wound. But Elrond's not the adventuring type; he'd rather stay at home and protect his people, which limits his usefulness and knocks him out of the running for party healer.

Goldmoon from the "Dragonlance" series is an adventuring healer, and she eventually becomes a "proper" cleric and doesn't depend on her magic staff. She'd be a good second choice for our party healer, but she lacks other all-around skills—fighting, leadership, etc.—and she's just not tough enough to make some of the group's more difficult choices.

Irish mythology's Bran the Blessed would be a great asset. His magic cauldron resurrected dead people, albeit it without the power of speech. But Bran was a giant who could wade the Irish Sea—not a good choice for the stealthy approach. Other might-have-beens include Polgara from David Edding's "Belgariad" (too shrewish) and Moiraine from the "Wheel of Time" (too full of herself and independent).

Though not a spellcasting cleric, Tolkien's Aragorn is our top choice for party healer. He's a well-rounded fighter/healer who has enough first aid, herbalism and borderline-magical abilities to treat any battle wounds; he can even help with magical wounds like the one Eowyn suffers after killing the Lord of the Nazgûl. Aragorn isn't the super-strong, super-fast killing machine that Conan is, but he's still a great warrior, and he's wise, intelligent and charismatic to boot. What's not to like? He's diplomatic enough to handle coleadership with Conan, just as he does with Gandalf. He's a great tracker and outdoorsman, capable of covering great distances on foot and a tremendous presence in any sense of the word.

ARAGORN

14TH LEVEL PALADIN • HUMAN, AGE 97 (APPEARS 40)

ALIGNMENT: Lawful Good
STR: 17 **DEX:** 16 **CON:** 18 **INT:** 16 **WIS:** 17 **CHA:** 18
THIEF (back): 7, **ATTACK:** 2 **ARMOR CLASS:** 2 (mail & shield), **HIT POINTS:** 110
NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES: detection sense 13, endurance 18, healing 15, herbalism 16, ancient languages 16, modern languages 16, reading/writing 17, riding land-based 17, ranning 12, tracking 19, survival 10
WEAPON PROFICIENCIES: longsword, club
Special Abilities: detect evil 80, +2 to all saves, immune to disease, lay on hands to cure 20 h.p. once/day, cure disease 3 times/week, area of protection 10' radius, cure undead as 12th level cleric
SPELLS MEMORIZED
 1st level: cure light wounds, detect poison, locate animals or plants
 2nd level: know alignment, slow poison
 3rd level: remove curse

MAGIC ITEMS: longsword +4 (Andúril), elixir of health, potion of healing

DESCRIPTION: This is Aragorn a few years after the events in the "Lord of the Rings," which take place when he's nearly 90; but remember: The rangers of Middle-earth are descended from the long-lived Númenóreans. Note that he's not an *ADSD* ranger; apart from tracking and possibly hiding in shadows, he displays none of the special abilities of that class, and unless you halt him at 7th level, you have to give him unsuitable spells. Being a paladin gives Aragorn his healing abilities and the healing proficiency as well, without making him a priest; he can lay on hands, cure disease—even help slow serious wounds like that from a Nazgûl blade by using remove curse or slow poison. He succeeds in driving the Nazgûl away on Weathertop and keeps the spirits at bay on the Paths of the Dead as a paladin might turn undead. Aragorn has a paladin's warhorse, called Roheryn, and of course, a kick-ass longsword, Andúril.



InQuest Gamer covers have ranged across a variety of subjects, from James T. Kirk to giant robots, but by far the two most popular subjects are monsters and babes. Thus far, we've run 12 covers devoted to the beauties and 18 devoted to the beasts.

The THIEF

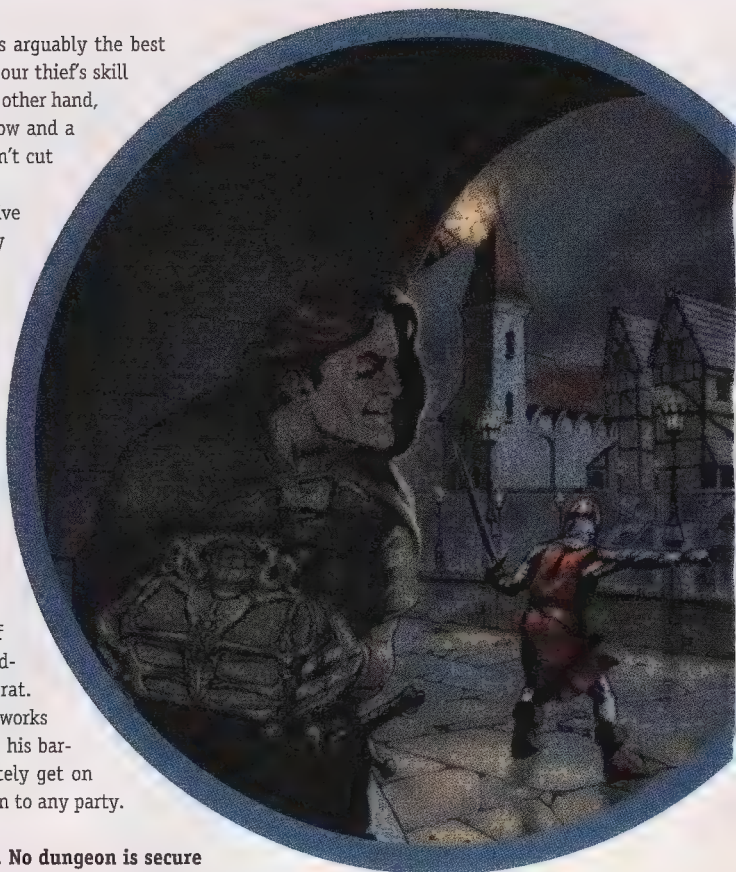
Silk from the "Belgariad" comes in a close second. He's arguably the best thief around and he's an acrobatic fighter. What he lacks is our thief's skill with the blade and knowledge of sorcery. Robin Hood, on the other hand, lacks finely polished thieving skills. He can fight with a bow and a blade, and he's as swashbuckling as you like, but he wouldn't cut it when it came to picking locks or finding traps.

Hanse Shadowspawn from "Thieves' World" is a superlative urban thief whose skill at chucking throwing knives is only equaled by his ability to move in complete silence. His problem is that he's not quite up to the standards needed to enter this group, and that he's just a kid, really. He acts cool, but you need more than cool against dark lords. Also not on our short list: Bilbo Baggins (too fat and useless) and Fagin (Stealing handkerchiefs? How is that helpful?).

Our choice for a rogue who can pick lint out of a pocket blindfolded, trade parries with the finest swordsmen in the land and charm the ladies? None other than the Gray Mouser. He's the consummate thief: super stealthy, cunning and a great acrobat. He's also a lethal swordsman and he's studied wizardry, making him very versatile. Sorcerous opponents don't faze him at all; early in his career he kills the wizard Hristomilo with a single toss of a silver dagger, and he's experienced with all manner of weirdness—including being magically shrunk to the size of a rat. Though most at home in Lankmar, where his streetwise cool works to best effect, Mouser has adventured all over Nehwon with his barbarian friend Fafhrd. He's a great team player; he'd definitely get on fine with Conan and Elminster, and his cheerfulness is a boon to any party.

So there you have it—the best party in the business. No dungeon is secure from these four, no villain safe. Stacked up against anything but unbeatable odds, this roleplaying party comes out on top. Grendel would be ground beef. The Red Wizards of Thay'd be roasted. Thulsa Doom'd be toast. Sauron'd be squashed... Well, maybe not Sauron. 🍌

Dan Joyce reckons Sauron just got bad press, and that anyone who wanted to kill hobbits can't have been all bad.



GRAY MOUSER

15TH LEVEL THIEF / 7TH LEVEL FIGHTER /
3RD LEVEL MAGE • HUMAN, AGE 30

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

ABILITIES: S15 D19 Co16 I17 W10 Ch17

THACO (basic): 13, ATTACKS: 3

ARMOR CLASS: 4 (leather), HIT POINTS: 90

NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES: appraising 17, blind-fighting, disguise 16, etiquette 17, gaming 17, herbalism 15, jumping 15, modern languages 19, local history 19, land-based riding 10, reading/writing 18, rope use 19, spellcraft 16, swimming 15, tumbling 20

WEAPON PROFICIENCIES: longsword (specialized), dagger (among others)

THIEF SKILLS: PP 90%, OL 90%, F/RT 90%, MS 95%, HS 95%, DN 75%, CW 90%, RL 50%, Backstab x 5

MAGIC ITEMS: Dagger +3 (Scalpel), rapier +3 (Cat's Claw)

DESCRIPTION: In the novels, Mouser began as a wizard's apprentice; in *AD&D*, he'd have to begin as a fighter because he's got 15 strength and 17 intelligence, not the other way around. Dexterity, at 19, is a no-brainer; no one has faster reactions than Mouser. For the purposes of *AD&D*, treat Mouser's rapier, Scalpel, as a magical longsword. He fights with this in one hand and a dagger, Cat's Claw, in the other, at no penalty, giving him three attacks/round. Mouser can more than hold his own in a fight, but he's even better as a thief; you name it, Mouser can do it. Being triple-classed has given Mouser a lot of proficiency slots. Note that he's familiar with sorcery, but doesn't actively use it, so he has no spells memorized and he doesn't own a spellbook.



Eugene T. Dudley, the ultimate *Magic* loser, has been roasted and toasted in every issue of *InQuest Gamer* since #25. That's 25 straight losses for the poor sod. He isn't much for collectible card games, but we ought to give him points for persistence.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

STAR WARS

EPISODE VII

Rise of the New Republic

With the death of the EMPEROR and the destruction of his second DEATH STAR, the evil GALACTIC EMPIRE collapses into confusion. Rebel Alliance leaders declare the creation of a NEW REPUBLIC, while Luke Skywalker trains a new generation of Jedi Knights.

But as the galaxy's citizens celebrate victory, rogue **IMPERIAL WARLORDS** prepare to strike! On the Imperial capital of **CORUSCANT**, an Imperial mastermind seizes power and declares war on the New Republic. And in the distant **UNKNOWN REGIONS**, the Emperor's foremost strategist, **GRAND ADMIRAL THRAWN**, rallies a massive fleet and gathers secret Imperial technology in preparation for an offensive to seize control of the galaxy...

That's the way the movies after "Return of the Jedi" would go, if they followed the current Star Wars history based off the books, comics and other stories officially approved by George Lucas and company. With all the prequel hype, *IQ Gamer* thought it'd make a refreshing change to research everything there is to know about our favorite characters beyond the movies and to ask the question, "What is the future of 'Star Wars?'"

Luke Skywalker

While lesser men might have retired after bringing down an evil Empire, that sort of thing's just a warm-up act for a guy like Luke Skywalker. In the years after the fall of Emperor Palpatine, he's tangled with alien invaders, Imperial warlords and Dark Jedi, re-established the order of Jedi Knights and even kissed a girl or two.

Luke had no sooner ushered daddy Anakin into the great beyond than he was called on to travel the backwater world of Bakura, ream an alien invasion fleet and send the dino Ssi-ruuk back into unknown space with their tails between their legs.

Burning to re-establish the order of Jedi Knights, Luke sought people who knew something of the Force. His first big lead was a Jedi Master named Joruu C'baoth. Too bad C'baoth was an insane old coot and a clone enslaved by the Dark Side. Luke had to put the old boy down in a riveting lightsaber battle, but not before facing a clone of himself.

Luke's Doublemint fun continued when a clone of Emperor Palpatine returned to task the universe. In confronting the new Emperor, Luke turned to the Dark Side, studying it, trying to learn how to defeat it from within, and nearly fell into it's power. But in the end, he recovered and dispatched the Emperor when he and newly Force-trained Leia turned one of the Emperor's Force storms—a Force-conjured, stellar-sized hurricane—against him. The Emperor lost control of the summoned storm and it consumed him.

All this killing of Dark Side clones got to be too much for one guy, so Luke started his own Jedi Academy on the jungle moon Yavin 4, the onetime secret Rebel base. There were a few glitches in the early days—like the time the spirit of an ancient Sith lord showed up and offed some of his students—but eventually he got things running smoothly, and for the first time in decades the galaxy has more than two Jedi flying around at a time.

Time enough for Luke to relax a bit and take a breather—maybe even get a girlfriend. Mara Jade, his one-time enemy, fills the bill nicely.

By Bill Smith



DARTH HATER Luke's still stomping the Dark Side 20 years after "Jedi."

HAN SOLO

To smugglers, being dead is better than being respectable. Add it up: General of the New Republic. War hero. Husband of the President of the New Republic. Han Solo is now, if anything, respectable.

Han is still famous for what he does best: Outsmarting the bad guys. His first major pain was a rogue Imperial Warlord named Zsinj. After spending the better part of a year chasing him across the galaxy, Han defeated Zsinj at planet Dathomir when dozens of battle cruisers atomized Zsinj's Super Star Destroyer. That was also the year he married Leia Organa, after winning her back from the handsome and charming Hapan Prince Isolder who had courted Leia's affections.

Too restless to really settle down, Han spent decades looking for the least excuse to barrel off on adventures, often backing up his wife's diplomatic language with a well-placed blaster shot. He won over both the independent smugglers of the galaxy and a private fleet run by former Corellian Senator Garm Bel Iblis and convinced them to join the New Republic at a time when Grand Admiral Thrawn's Imperial fleets were moving in for the kill. Han also helped the Republic recover the lost Dark Force fleet of Katana dreadnoughts when the New Republic fleet was down to patched-together X-wings.

Seven years after Endor, Han flew to Kessel on a diplomatic mission, but he didn't exactly get a warm welcome: Moruth Doole, Kessel's renegade ruler, shot down the *Millennium Falcon* and dumped Han and Chewie in the spice mines. They escaped Kessel amidst explosions and laser blasts, but ended up prisoners at Maw Installation, the secret Imperial base which designed the original Death Star prototype. Fortunately, Han worked his usual magic, throwing the local Imperial fleet into disarray and stealing the Sun Crusher, an Imperial starship that can blow up stars.

Trouble found Han again when he returned home to Corellia. A revolutionary group named the Human League seized power and Solo was captured and brought before their leader, his sadistic cousin Thracken Sal-Solo. Han took a lot of abuse from Thracken as a kid, so it was time to get even: After escaping, Han teamed up with a New Republic fleet to destroy Thracken's fleet and oust his regime.

Han's a family man now, but he'll probably be taking down the bad guys from his deathbed.



LENDING A HAN Solo is anything but a loner as he helps his wife Leia defend the New Republic.

CHEWBACCA

Rescue Han. Take care of Princess. Fix *Falcon*. Rough up bad guys. Chewbacca's got the routine down by now. With a sworn life-debt to Han Solo—probably the most trouble-prone human in the galaxy—Chewie's life is never dull.

A former Imperial slave, Chewie took a personal hand in booting the slavers and their Trandoshan lackeys off his homeworld of Kashyyyk. Bounty hunter Bossk is a Trandoshan—it was his people who convinced the Imperials to enslave the Wookiees.

When Leia was being hounded by the Noghri, Chewie brought Leia to Kashyyyk; what other place in the galaxy could be safer than a city filled with Wookiees? While the Noghri were stopped, Chewie's lifelong best friend Salporin died while protecting Leia.

Chewie's life-debt has kept him close to the action and Han always seems to need a lot of looking after, like the time Han was captured by the Yevetha and Chewie and his son had to come to the rescue. Now, with peace at hand, Chewie splits his time between his "human family" of Han, Leia and their children, and his own family and friends back on Kashyyyk.



Cow Nose—*InQuest Gamer's* mascot and contributing editor Rick Swan's rotund rodent ravager—has been bandied about in the pages of the magazine since it's early days, but she made her pictorial debut only recently, in issue 29. Since then, she's appeared 21 times in *InQuest*.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

LEIA ORGANA SOLO

Leia's both warrior and diplomat, and she's had plenty of opportunities to show the galaxy both sides. With the Emperor dead, she rallied hundreds of worlds to sign onto the New Republic, preventing the galaxy from plunging into utter chaos. Between conferences and battles, Leia studied the Force and learned how to use a lightsaber.

When Grand Admiral Thrawn showed up, Leia found herself on the run from mysterious attackers, a previously unknown race named the Noghri. Originally the servants of Darth Vader, these slight but deadly warriors did the bidding of Imperial Grand Admiral Thrawn—until Leia convinced them that she was “Lady Vader” and their true mistress. They promptly switched sides and even took care of Thrawn; just as he was about to crush the New Republic, one of his Noghri bodyguards assassinated him on the bridge of his own Star Destroyer.

While the battles raged, Leia gave birth to Jacen and Jaina Solo. Then, a year later, after eliminating the reincarnated Emperor, Leia gave birth to Anakin Solo.

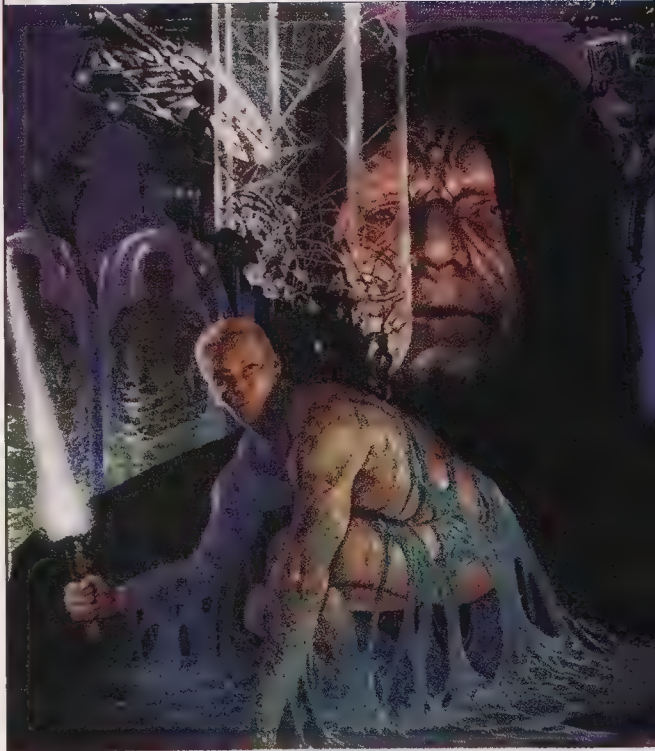
Leia became President of the New Republic, a role which has let her fulfill her destiny. She's faced some serious challenges, ranging from naive anti-military officials devoted to disarming the New Republic to terrorists blowing up the New Republic Senate Chamber and framing her husband. Her kids have faced danger any number of times—but threatening the children of a Jedi's daughter is not a smart thing to do, as several of her foes have discovered.

Leia's proven the Organa name proud as she's a great leader that helped the New Republic stretch across the stars, uniting millions of worlds and finally bringing peace to the galaxy—at least for another week.



PRESIDENT PRINCESS Leia's gone on to become the elected leader of the New Republic.

star wars TIMELINE



What does Star Wars' future look like? Here's a timeline of major post-“Jedi” events. The times are in years after the fall of the Empire on Endor.

- 0 Rebels defeat Ssi-ruuk aliens at Bakura.
- 1 Rogue Squadron captures Coruscant. Ysanne Isard thought killed in the Bacta War.
- 1 Imperial Warlord Zsinj killed at Dathomir. Leia and Han Solo marry.
- 2 Imperial Grand Admiral Thrawn takes over half the galaxy, but killed by his own Noghri bodyguards. Jacen and Jaina Solo born.
- ⑥ Reincarnated Emperor Palpatine nearly overthrows the New Republic, but is killed in battle with Luke and Leia. Anakin Solo born.
- 7 Luke Skywalker founds his Jedi Academy on Yavin Four.
- 9 New Republic defeats Imperial Admiral Daala, Durga the Hutt and other forces.
- 12 New Republic moves to “peace time footing” and disarms. The Yevetha, a dangerous alien race, attack but are defeated.
- 13 Terrorists bomb the New Republic Senate Chamber.
- 14 Han Solo stops cousin Thracken Sal-Solo from taking over Corellian system.
- 19 New Republic and remnant Imperial forces sign final peace treaty. Luke and Mara Jade marry.
- 20- Jacen & Jaina Solo attend the Jedi Academy.

■ Bill Smith

TOP 10 TABOO "STAR WARS" CARDS

Decipher is well-known for being thorough in releasing cards from every aspect of the "Star Wars" Trilogy, but licensing restrictions and plain good taste prevent them from really pushing the envelope. Happily, none of that stuff is stopping us:

- 10 Wookiee Lice
- 9 Ambiguously Gendered Protocol Droid
- 8 Lando's 14th Bottle of Colt 45
- 7 Hot Wampa Luv
- 6 Luke's Doubly Impure Thoughts
- 5 Grand Moff Tarkin's Inflatable "Companion"
- 4 Dead, Dead, Dead Ewok
- 3 Greedo Shoots First (hey, wait a sec...)
- 2 Pants-less Vader
- 1 Sex with Jabba ■ IQ Gamer staff

MARA JADE

Mara Jade's a woman of many careers—agent of the Emperor, smuggler's aide and leader of a merchant empire. She started off as the "Emperor's Hand," an elite operative answering directly to the Emperor. Raised from childhood by the Emperor and trained in the ways of the Force, she would have been as feared as Vader—if she had allowed tales of her deeds to spread. Most witnesses ended up dead before they could carry the word of her achievement.

Palpatine sent her to the remote desert world of Tatooine on a simple mission: Infiltrate the palace of Jabba the Hutt and kill Luke Skywalker. She failed, and the Emperor died because of it.

Jade joined smuggling kingpin Talon Karrde and rose through his organization's ranks to become his chief lieutenant. Though seemingly poised and stable, dark dreams haunted her, the Emperor's spirit seemingly urging her to kill Skywalker.

So, when Luke wandered into her life, Mara was ready to kill him. She wanted to kill him, dreamed about killing him...and just couldn't do it. Finally recognizing that the Emperor was the bad guy all along, Mara and Luke became allies just in time to be captured by Thrawn. Mara tried to take Thrawn down by seizing control of his Star Destroyer and killing him by using the Force to crush his windpipe, but failed. Thrawn imprisoned her, but Luke later saved her.

After saving Luke from the mad clone C'baoth, Mara became an envoy at large for the newly-formed Smugglers' Alliance, giving her a good excuse to travel the galaxy and spy on anyone who needed to be watched. Mara also advanced her Jedi training under Luke.

Mara slowly rose to become a Master Trader, running her own company while training to someday take over Karrde's operations. Now, over a decade after she first allied with Luke, the galaxy is at peace and she and Luke can resolve their last bit of unfinished business: Marriage.



MRS. SKYWALKER Luke's wife, Mara Jade, was once the Emperor's deadliest assassin.

C-3PO and R2-D2

Artoo has stuck close to Luke, and has participated in many of his adventures. He saw first-hand the defeat of the Ssi-ruuk, Warlord Zsinj and Thrawn and the founding of the Jedi Academy.

Of course, Artoo's been more than furniture. For example, when Thrawn booby trapped the New Republic's core computers, Artoo sliced into the systems and got around Thrawn's trap programs. That turned a probable disaster for the New Republic into a nasty surprise for the Imperials.

When Luke "joined" the reincarnated Emperor, Artoo went right to work. Luke programmed Artoo with the command and control codes for the Empire's World Devastators. While Palpatine gleefully contemplated the destruction of the planet Calamari with these Star

Destroyer-sized war droids, Artoo plugged into the Imperial network and remotely shut them all down.

Then there's See-Threepio, who finds all the conflict too much for his circuits. He's been by Princess Leia's side continually, helping with languages, customs and protocol. After years of getting shot at by Imperial stormtroopers, it was nice to actually do the job he'd been programmed for.

Of course, it's never been that simple, almost always due to Han Solo. Han ordered Threepio to deceive the Noghri by imitating Leia in comlink transmissions to throw them off her trail. Threepio did the job, but he about soiled his golden britches pulling it off.



The most expensive feature to create? The "Book of Exodus" *Magic* feature from issue #39, chock full of sculpted Bottle Gnomes, artifact medallions, a Squee's Toy, handmade scrolls. When you factor in the cost of props and photography, the price tag hit the \$2,000 mark.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

WEDGE ANTILLES

“Wedge, we want you and your pilots to conquer Coruscant.” Fourteen to one-hundred billion odds. No problem. Might as well ask the pilots of Rogue Squadron to blow up the Death Star with only a proton torpedo. Oh wait, Wedge’s already done that. Twice.

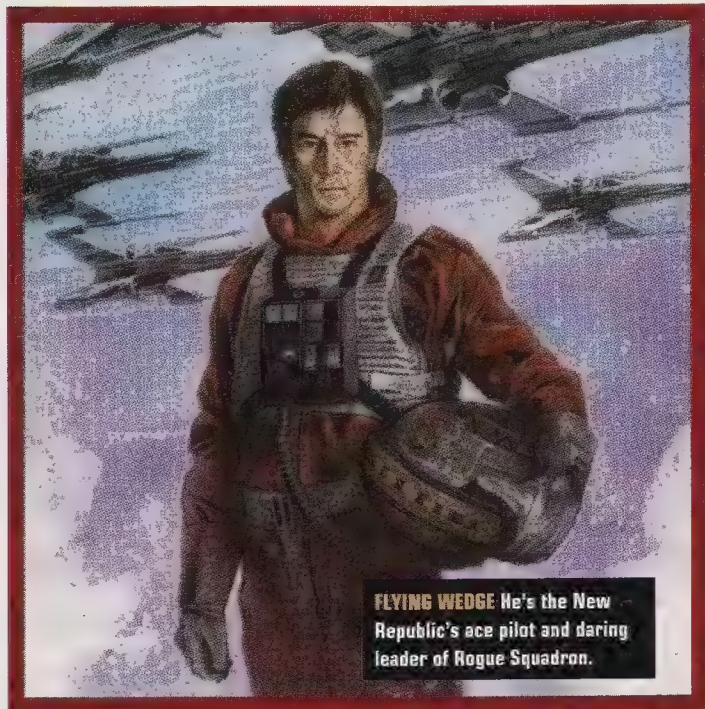
The crack Rebel X-wing group Rogue Squadron got its start on Hoth, and Wedge took command from Luke Skywalker soon after the fall of the Empire. During the New Republic’s first campaign to capture Coruscant, Wedge led Rogue Squadron to the Imperial stronghold to take out the planet’s security grid. Stranded and with no hope of reinforcements, Wedge found a greater ally: the forces of nature. The Rogues seized the planet’s climate control systems and triggered an electrical storm of titanic proportions, blowing out the planetary power grid and disabling the planetary shields. The New Republic took the former capital of the Empire almost without a fight. Not a bad day’s work.

However, the battle wasn’t yet over. Coruscant’s ruler, Ysanne Isard, fled but left behind a nasty present: the “Krytos virus,” a deadly and highly infectious disease that could be cured only with massive bacta treatments. So what was Isard’s next job? She became ruler of Thyferra, the galaxy’s major source of bacta.

With the New Republic unable to strike and Isard allowing millions to die as she withheld the bacta treatments, Wedge and the Rogues took matters into their own hands. They resigned their commissions and secured a private fleet of fighters. In a fortunate “coincidence,” they purchased a squadron of X-wings that had been classified as “surplus” by the New Republic, and soon the “Bacta War” was in full swing. Wedge, the Rogues and a group of private freighters decimated Isard’s Imperial fleet, capturing her Super Star Destroyer, the Lusankya, with Isard presumed dead in the battle.

Wedge formed Wraith Squadron, a misfit X-wing fighter squadron for covert missions, and helped take out Imperial Warlord Zsinj. Wedge and Rogue Squadron continued for many years to be the New Republic’s premier fighting force, with Wedge eventually becoming a New Republic general. He joined Ackbar and the other New Republic elite in directing the war against the last Imperial remnants and paving the way for a final peace.

Freelancer Bill Smith is confident that an Episode X would bring back those lovable Ewoks...infected with the Krytos virus.



FLYING WEDGE He's the New Republic's ace pilot and daring leader of Rogue Squadron.

shades of the EMPIRE



So will *Star Wars* CCG players ever be able to unleash Black Sun's top operatives against Darth Vader? How about sending some Noghri Death Commandos down to Endor to really teach the Ewoks a thing or two?

Don't get too excited just yet. Decipher is busy finishing up the expansions based on "Return of the Jedi," but there might be an expansion that goes beyond the movies. Jonathan Quisenberry, Decipher's CCG media relations specialist—and Red Leader when the killer decks come out—says, "We are looking into releasing the first of these products sometime later this year. It will probably follow the 'Shadows of the Empire' storyline and will probably not come as a full expansion."

So what's the deal? Will this set have photos, actors in costumes, computer-generated images, photo-realistic art? All undecided. Quisenberry says the set is likely to be "dedicated to those characters and events that are key to the story," but beyond that, there aren't any details for public release just yet.

Any talk of expansions beyond *Shadows*, for example based on the Timothy Zahn novels or X-wing comics, are well down the road—if they happen at all. Still, there would definitely be some excitement! Kyle Puttkammer of *Galactic Quest* in Burford, Ga., says, "Anything that Decipher puts out I get behind 100 percent...*Star Wars* is our number one selling game. I guarantee when the new 'Star Wars' movie comes out, everyone would be ready to play a movie expansion." —Bill Smith

Game patz'ooza

A WHIRLWIND
TOUR OF PUZZLES,
CARTOONS
AND TRIVIA

It's our 50th issue so help us celebrate by singing along: "Happy anniversary, happy anniversary, happy anniversary, haan... peee anniversary!!"

That rocked! As a reward you win free tickets to the year's biggest gaming event—**GAMEPALOOZA '08**. We booked all the top acts to entertain you. We got Richard Garfield, we got DCI, we even got hot new stars like Brian Douglas Ahern and his Toons. So grab a piece of lawn, put that cooler down and get ready to groove. It's paa-ty time!

Cults Across America



BY THE **INQUEST GAMER** STAFF
WITH SEAN P. FANNON &
ALEX SHVARTSMAN

DO THE SUMMON SHUFFLE

So you think you know your angels from your zombies? Well, creatures aren't exactly what they seem in *Magic*. See if you can match each creature to its proper summon type. Hint: None of them make sense.



1 BELLOWING FIEND



2 BLOOD VASSAL



3 GUIDING SPIRIT



4 MAGMA SAUR



5 MARJHAN



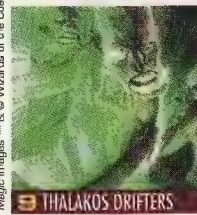
6 PHYREXIAN GHOUL



7 REEF PIRATES



8 SKYSHROUD TROLL



9 THALAKO'S DRIFTERS



10 WANDERING MAGE

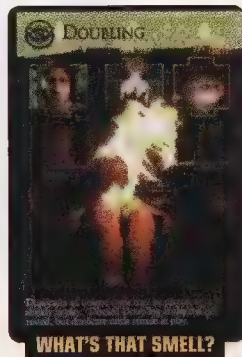
SUMMON TYPES:

- Angel
- Cleric
- Elemental
- Giant
- Serpent
- Ships
- Spirit
- Thrull
- Townfolk
- Zombie

Magic: imagine™ & © Wizards of the Coast. Monopoly guy™ & © Parker Bros.

NUMBER CRUNCHING

Mana costs, spell points, attack factors, card values... if you think about it, gaming is all about numbers. There are wee lil' ones—like how many enjoyable hours we spent playing *Spellfire*—and big honkin' ones—like the number of donuts eaten every week at *InQuest*. But either kind are darn interesting wethinks.



WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

- 12 Armor class of the Dragon Tiamat.
- 1 CCG card depicting a human ass with fire shooting out of it. (*Imajica*)
- 10 Collectible card games being supported currently (of the 75 or so released in the last five years).
- 11 Eyes on the average Beholder.
- 13 Great vampire clans in the World of Darkness
- 20 Roll on a D20 which always results in a hit in *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*.
- 40 Spaces on a *Monopoly* board.
- 54 Maximum number of cards in a legal *Doomtown* deck.
- 204 Different artists have illustrated *Magic* cards.
- 960 Average number of hours it takes to advance a character to 50th level in *EverQuest*.
- 3,302 Different *Magic: The Gathering* cards as of May 1999.
- 6,910 Number of dollars it would take to buy a complete mint set of *Magic: The Gathering* on the aftermarket.
- 21,715 Average number of people who visit the *Magic Dojo* web site (www.thedoho.com) every day.
- 32,000 Black Lotus cards in print.
- 800,000 Approximate number of board wargames sold in 1976; compared to less than 50,000 in 1998.
- 5,662,332 Patent number covering the key play mechanics of *Magic*.
- 400,000,000 And growing... Japanese language *Pokémon* CCG cards sold.

MAGIC COSTS MEGABUCKS



DO NOT PASS GO. TAKE A CHANCE AND READ THIS CARTOON ON... THE HISTORY OF GAMING

1914: H. G. Wells publishes "Little Wars," the first miniatures game for public consumption. First recorded rules argument happens soon thereafter.

YOU'RE BLOODY WELL DAFT, FARNSWORTH, IF YOU THINK THE HIGHLANDERS CAN MOVE TWO INCHES IN THE SPAN OF FOUR PHASES!

NIGEL, YOU WANKER--THE KILT MODIFIER DOUBLES THEIR MOVEMENT ALLOWANCE!

1952: The wargaming hobby is born as Charles Roberts publishes first commercial board wargame, "Tactics."

AMERICA HATES A COWARD!

IT'S MY NERVES, SIR.

YOU'RE GOING INTO COMBAT, SON!

CARDBOARD COMBAT!!

10 Questions With Garfield

INQUEST: If you designed *Magic* today, what would you do different?

GARFIELD: I wouldn't assume people would buy no more than five decks per expansion and that they'd play tournaments seriously. If I'd known these things, I'd have designed for them. We always knew a large number of the early degenerate decks existed but assumed they would be unaffordable and controlled by house rules.

IQ: If Hollywood ever made a movie about *Magic*, who would you want to play you?

G: Christopher Lloyd.

IQ: What projects are you currently working on?

G: A couple computer games, one real time and one turn-based (both strategy). Also a fighting card game. I can't say when these will be out, if at all; they are at the early stages. My last big project which is out, though a bit hard to find, is *What Where You Thinking?* My first party game.

IQ: Do you think you will be able to create a game that surpasses *Magic* in popularity?

G: No. Though I will clearly have more opportunities for a second mega-hit, and I like to think I have the talent, there are a huge number of factors (which you may as well call luck) that make it unlikely. It is also possible that a person who redefines an industry by looking at it differently may be incapable of doing that a second time, since their "different way" has already been used.

IQ: *WoTC* already owns *TSR* and *Five Rings*. If you got to pick any other



BIG CAT DADDY IQ Gamer interviewing "the man" behind *Magic*.

Photo by Paul Schmaldt, Howard Garfield photo courtesy of Wizards of the Coast.

gaming company to buy, what would it be?

G: The answer from the heart is Blizzard. I am a fan of the "craft" series (*Starcraft*, *Warcraft*) and *Diablo* and think they would be a good match for us. The sensible answer is probably Games Workshop.

IQ: Who dresses you?

G: I do. My wife Lily married me knowing full well that I would continue to dress myself.

IQ: What's one change to *Magic* that you don't like?

G: The homogenization of the art. At the start I wanted a spread of art that people loved and hated, not all art that people liked.

IQ: What kind of things do you collect?

G: Socks.

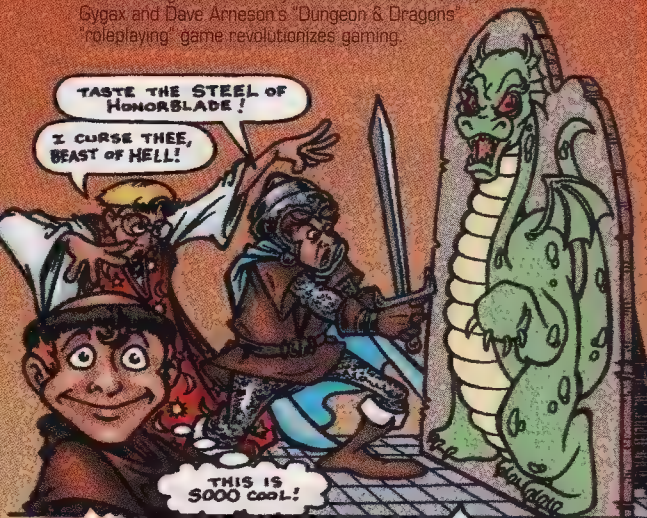
IQ: What do you do day-to-day at *WoTC*? What's your job title?

G: I'd say 25% of my time is spent on company issues and press matters. Another 25% is spent on general R&D issues, like new rules and issues in *Magic* or developing or reviewing new games. The final 50% of my time is spent on designing new games. It should be noted that I consider playing games to be part of designing games, so about half that time is playing games.

IQ: What's your honest opinion of *Spellfire*? Don't be diplomatic.

G: I was quite impressed with its difference from *Magic*, especially considering how early it came out. There were many games that came out which were only one step from *Magic*. Also, one of the best expansions of all time for any set was *Nightstalkers*. (Sorry, I have been playing games too long not to be diplomatic.)

1974: Thought primitive by modern standards, Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson's *Dungeons & Dragons* "roleplaying" game revolutionizes gaming.



1979: By the end of the decade, gaming has entered the mainstream with hundreds of books, conventions and even a TV show. With popularity comes a backlash from religious groups, who believe it blasphemous to pretend to cast spells.



BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW

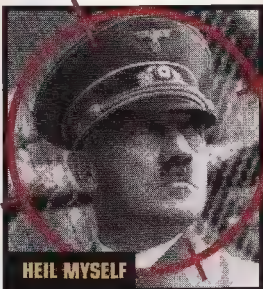
Rats mistaken for Chihuahuas... stolen kidneys after a bender in New Orleans... alligators in New York City's sewers... Fah! Those urban myths are for weenies! Here are some gosh-honest bits of gaming folklore handed down through the ages.

- **THE ACTUAL INVENTOR OF THE ROLEPLAYING** game experience, Dave Wesely, hated the idea of them being called "roleplaying games." He thought that made them sound too much like psycho-babble acting class garbage.

- **AD&D'S FAMOUS "ARMOR CLASS" TERMINOLOGY** came from a naval miniatures wargame based on the Jane's series of military hardware books.

- **THE IDEA OF CHARACTERS DEVELOPING OVER TIME** and earning "experience" points came from a World War I air combat game called *Fight In the Skies*, developed by Mike Carr. This game later evolved into TSR's own *Dawn Patrol*.

- **CHAMPIONS' "WINGS OF THE VALKYRIE"** was the only module ever pulled from retail chains for "anti-semitism," mainly due to Jewish activists. Why? Because the time-traveling heroes were faced with choosing a worse future if they actually popped Hitler.



- **AD&D ADVENTURE B3 "Palace of the Silver Princess"** (1st ed. 1981) is the rarest module, valued at around \$600. The reason: the artwork was allegedly borderline pornographic. TSR management grabbed up all the copies they could before it shipped to distributors, going so far as to sneak into employee offices to retrieve copies that had already been passed out to staffers.

- **NINTENDO** literally translated from Japanese means "leave luck to heaven" and was founded as a playing card company.

- **PONG WAS THE FIRST MASS MARKET VIDEO GAME** and stayed in production longer than any other video/computer game. Atari Inc. made the game for nearly 20 years.

- **THE MOST BROKEN MAGIC CARD** ever isn't Black Lotus, Stroke of Genius or even Goblin Artisans. It's the playtest version of Time Walk. Its text read: "Opponent loses next turn." Designers quickly re-worded the card when many of their playtesters assumed it meant the caster gets to win the game as soon as the next turn starts.

- **GERMANS PLAY MORE GAMES** per capita than any other country. More Germans play board games at night than go out to the movies.

DCI VS. THE SHADOW CONSPIRACY

Magic's governing rules body, the Duelists' Convocation International (DCI), works in such mysterious ways we've never been able to figure it out. Until we saw the "Total Disclosure" episode of "The X-Files" that is; now it all kinda makes sense.

THE SHADOW CONSPIRACY



DUELIST CONVOCATION INTERNATIONAL



BASIC OBJECTIVE

Transplant alien DNA into human bodies.

Transplant human dollars into WatC's bank account.

USE OF EXPLOSIVES

Blew up Federal building in Texas to cover up alien-infected humans.

Blew up Tolarian Academy to cover up stupidity-infected playtesters.

ULTIMATE GOAL

Save themselves by changing their DNA so only their small clique survives when aliens colonize Earth.

Save their jobs by changing *Magic* rules so frequently only their small clique knows what's going on.

USE OF INSECTS

Killers bees bred to infect population with alien virus.

Killers Bees and similar cards created to infect population with *Magic* bug.

PROBABLE "LEADER"

Cigarette Smoking Man.

Bow Tie Wearing Man.

HANDLE CRITICAL SITUATION BY

Killing off existing agents and starting over.

Killing off existing rules and starting over.

THE REAL ENEMY

Game geeks smarter than they are.

Game geeks smarter than they are.

WHY IT WORKS

Mindless public that can be duped into believing UFOs don't exist contrary to overwhelming evidence.

Mindless players that can be duped into believing shiny paper is worth more than non-shiny paper contrary to overwhelming evidence.

Cancer Man photo © FOX Broadcasting Company. Hitler & Bommer photo courtesy of Everett Collection.

1981: TSR Inc., the company that owns D&D, eats wargame giant SPI, ending an era.

MMM. JUST PAST THE EXPIRATION DATE.



1983: The first primitive fantasy computer games, like "Wizardry," "Ultima" and "Bard's Tale," appear.

IT JUST KINDER BLINKS AN' BLEEP'S 'A ME WHEN I WHACK IT WIT' ME AXE!

HARUMPH! CAN'T SEE THIS EVER CATCHING ON.



1992: The early '90s sees the emergence of goth culture and White Wolf's "Vampire: The Masquerade" roleplaying game.

WHO--? WHAT ARE THEY?

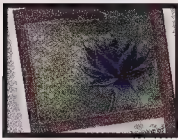


I DUNNO... BUT SHE ASKED IF SHE COULD ROLL MY DICE--

--AND I WET MYSELF!

WHAT IT'S WORTH

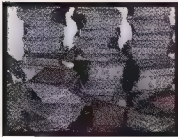
In the heat of acquisition we sometimes lose track of what our precious collectibles equate to in that scary realm some call "the real world." Never go there.



BLACK LOTUS



= 800 DONUTS



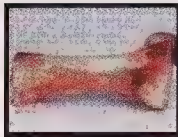
COMPLETE SET OF MAGIC



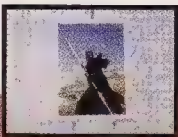
= USED CAR



SPELLFIRE STARTER



= SOUP BONE



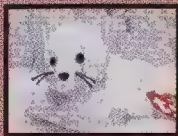
JOE JUSKO ORIGINAL ART



= MONTHLY MESSAGES FOR 20 YEARS



EVERQUEST AND YEAR OF SERVICE



= SEAMORE SEAL BEANIE

REALITY CHECK

Games generally try to mimic reality. But a close look at some of the most popular titles reveals a few things that just don't quite make sense.

FEET OF STEEL

In the roleplaying game *GURPS*, a 200 pound acrobat can fall 15 feet and not be harmed but will do enough damage to penetrate the top of an armored personnel carrier.

SLOW BOAT...

In the World War II play-by-mail game *Victory*, motorized cargo ships take six months to cross the Atlantic, longer than it took Columbus.

DON'T PLAY THE BUTLER

In the popular board game *Clue*, not only does the murderer not know he did it, he can win by successfully revealing himself as guilty.

ARMORED TENTS

In the miniatures game *Warhammer 40K*, tents will stop bullets, lasers and even shotgun blasts one time out of six.

SCHWINN POWER

Ramming damage done by vehicles in FASA's *Shadowrun* RPG depends entirely on speed, not on size or weight. So getting hit by a bicycle can do more harm than getting run into by a bulldozer.

SKINNY SUPERMEN

In the anime RPG *Mekton Zeta*, Gatling guns and machine guns weigh only five kilograms each, so even the scrawniest character can lift four at a time.

DEATH: THE EXPERIENCE

In the *Rolemaster* RPG standard system, PC gain experience points for dying.

MAN THE SWINE PENS!

In Blizzard's *Warcraft II* computer game, pig farms are four times harder to destroy than stone guard towers.



DINK DINK DINK *WarCraft's* pig pens tougher than stone.

Bebe photo courtesy The Everett Collection.

CARS WITHOUT WHEELS

In the *Civilization* computer game a diplomat can steal, and you can use, advanced technology like the automobile even if you've never even invented the wheel.

DEATH BY UGLY

In the *Pendragon* RPG being ugly is dangerous. Any character whose appearance stat falls to 3 is bedridden. If it goes to 0, they die.

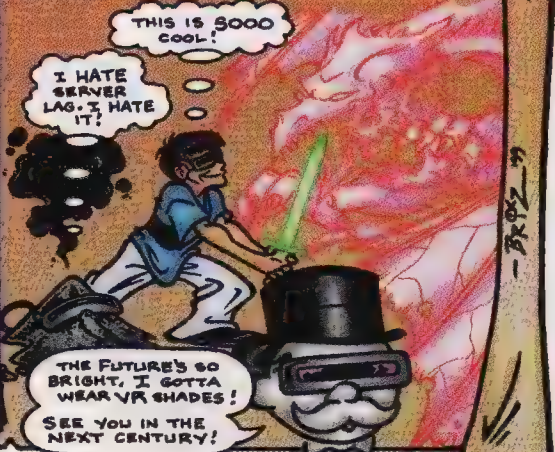
1993: An unknown company from Renton, Washington, publishes a little card game called "Magic: The Gathering." This first "collectible" card game starts a new gaming renaissance.



1997: Due to "Magic's" astounding success, its publisher, Wizards of the Coast, has the money to gobble up an ailing TSR.



1998: Thanks to the magic of the internet, thousands of players game together without ever leaving home. "Ultima Online" is first massive multi-player RPG but many more are in the works.



Message photo: Eric S. Fisher; 1993: Brown; Sources/Frac; Fandoms

GOOD KNIGHT

Medieval knights didn't really rely on their 500-year-old battlefield weapons. Instead, they used a 1435-dating which... French... the Emstate of France.

In the late 13th century warriors realized that tournaments were killing a significant number of their trained warriors. They began to set rules for the tournaments including the use of rebated lances, wheelless swords and specialized helmets which were designed solely for the joust.

The idea that full plate armor was so heavy that a knight could not stand up if he was knocked over in battle is a myth. Weight was distributed throughout the body by sewing points (leather ties to an arming jacket) and straps.

Most armor was custom fit to the wearer like tailored clothing and the average suit weighed 75 pounds.

As jousting grew more into a spectator sport, specialized armor was designed solely to make tournaments more spectacular. Maximilian I created a mechanized breastplate designed to burst apart when struck with a lance. The lance itself was also hollowed out so that it would shatter into a burst of splintered wood.

Chain mail is actually a term coined in the mid-1970s by RPG creators. The term maille or mail, is an old French word for mesh, or chain. So, in a way, saying chain mail is similar to saying chain chain. Next, if not all, modern armorers and historians refer to it simply as mail, or maille.

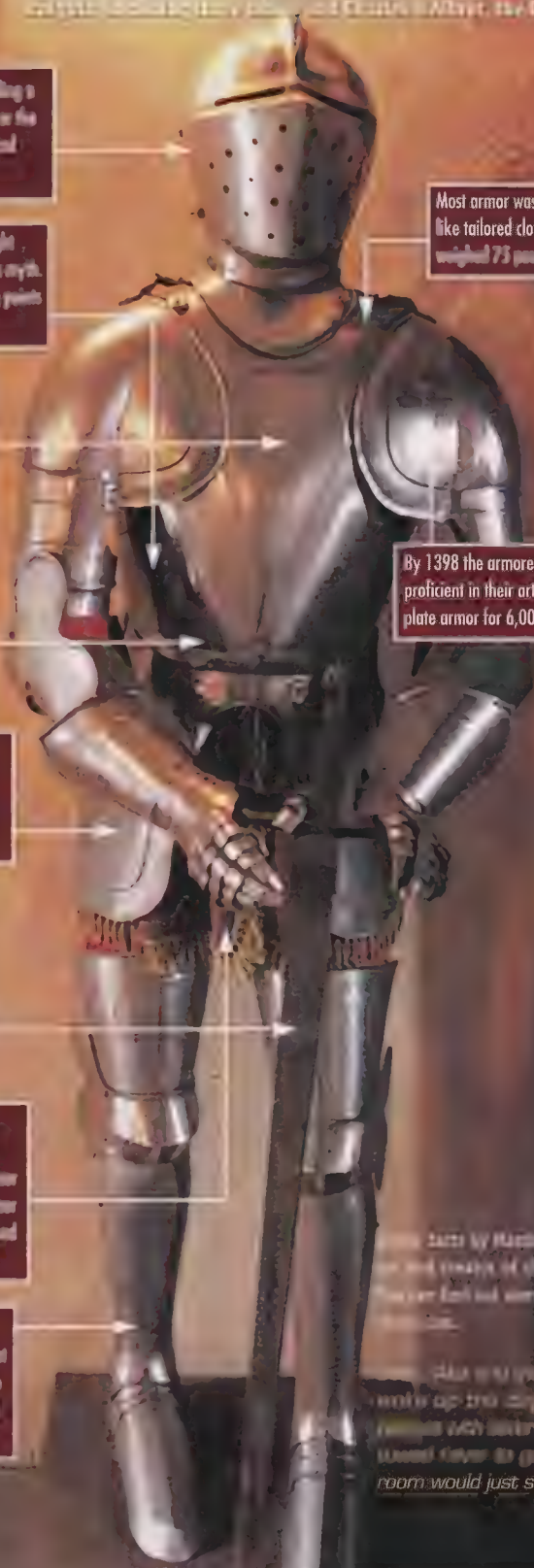
By 1398 the armorers of Milan were so proficient in their art that they could produce plate armor for 6,000 men in a few days.

Plate armor was sometimes covered with cloth or painted. The most common color was red. This was intended to keep your opponent from realizing exactly how much you were bleeding from your wounds.

Swords were virtually useless against plate armor. Blast or piercing weapons were much more effective. It was much easier to put a two inch deep hole in a belt with the spikes of a war hammer than thrusting a sword into a knight's armpit, which was also armored by mail gussets most of the time.

In 1520 Henry VIII had a spectacular suit of armor made for foot combat in a tournament. It covered every inch of his body in plate (except the inside of his hands). It included curries such as plate armor on the back of the knees, covering for his butt and gaiters, and armor on the inside of his elbows. However, due to tournament rules, he had to scrap the suit completely and have a different one made.

The most common downfall of armor was rust. Medieval squires came up with several interesting ways to avoid sending their knight onto the field in orange armor. Plate armor was cleaned with olive oil, and maille was thrown in a barrel filled half full with sand and vinegar, and rolled down a hill.



TQ THEATER
PRESENTS

THE TALENT SHOW

-OR-

How WotC will decide
which cards will go into
Magic 7th edition.

by the *InQuest* staff

A SUNNY AFTERNOON IN THE *INQUEST* GAMER OFFICE IS SHATTERED AS EDITORS JEFF HANNES AND TOM SLIZEWSKI HAPPEN UPON THEIR COLLEAGUE MIKE SEARLE, DEEP IN THE FRENZIED GRIP OF MADNESS!



All photos by Paul Schmitt. Magic: The Gathering is a trademark of Wizards of the Coast.

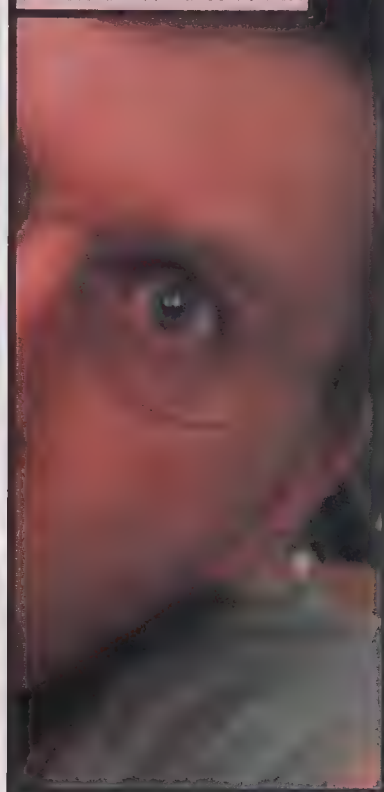
AS THE TWO WIRY EDITORS LEAVE,
MIKE SEARLE GLIMPSES SOMETHING...



THERE, LURKING BEHIND ANCIENT
COPIES OF *PENTHOUSE* AND
EMPTY BOTTLES OF *PROZAC*...



SOMETHING THAT NO
MORTAL EYE WAS EVER
MEANT TO GAZE UPON...



THE MAGIC 7TH EDITION TALENT SHOW!



IF THIS IS A PANEL OF LAME CELEBRITY JUDGES, WHERE'S JAMIE FARR?



LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD SO I CAN COLLECT MY PAYCHECK AND GET OUTTA HERE. FIRST CONTESTANT?



MAGUS OF THE UNSEEN!

PREPARE TO PASS THROUGH THE VEIL OF THE ORDINARY INTO THE REALM OF WONDER AND--

GET ON WITH IT.

..VERY WELL. PRESTO, CHANGE-O...

1.4.2 Untap target artifact opponent controls and gain control of it until end of turn. If that artifact is an artifact creature, it can attack and you may use any of its abilities that require $\{Q\}$ as part of the activation cost. When you lose control of the artifact, tap it.



...VOILA! THE RABBIT WOMBAT!

POOF!

MY LIFE IS PAIN



WHAT'S THE FREQUENCY KENNETH?

"RABBIT...?" IT'S RABID, YA JABRONI. NEXT!



NEXT UP IS THE DERANGE--

WAIT!

WAIT...HERE'S ONE:
WATCH AS I DEFY THE
LAWS OF EVERYTHING BUT
COMIC BOOK PHYSICS AND
RENDER MYSELF
COMPLETELY
...INVISIBLE!

CHOMP!



YOU'RE NOT
INVISIBLE, YOU
JUST TURNED
SIDWAYS.

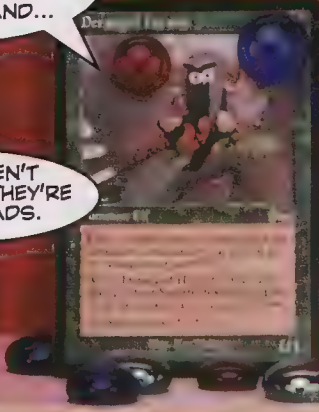
NEXT!

CRAP.

THE DERANGED HERMIT!

THESE...THESE ARE MY TRAINED SQUIRRELS...THEY'RE MY FRIENDS AND...

THOSE AREN'T SQUIRRELS. THEY'RE GLASS BEADS.



WE'RE BEADS? NO WONDER I CAN'T CRAP.

PANIC!

UMM...HI...I'M HERE TO...HERE TO... BLEARGHHH!



STAGE FRIGHT?

SUMMONING SICKNESS.

BA-DA-BUMP!

NEXT!

MOLD DEMON!

BEHOLD AS I TRANSFORM THIS SEEMINGLY NORMAL LOAF OF BREAD INTO--

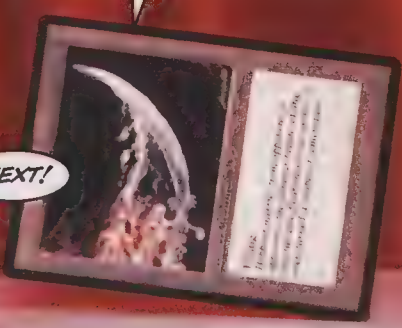
NEXT!

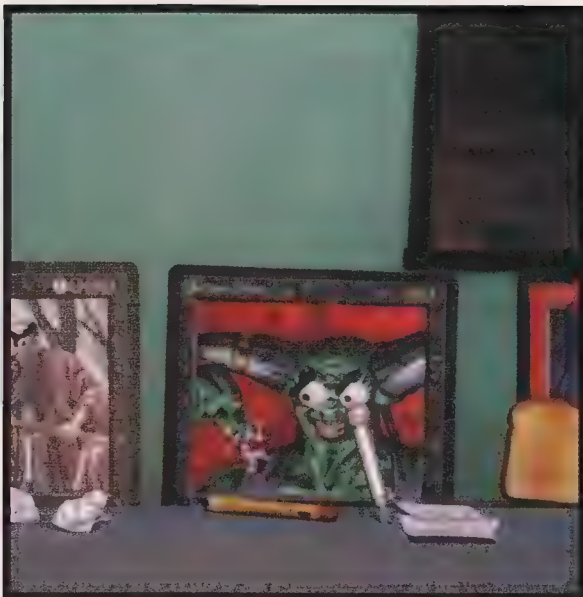


DANCING SCIMITAR!

I'M TAP-DANCING! GET IT? "TAP"...?

NEXT!







BOOM



THE INQUEST GAMER SCAVENGER HUNT

Want to get your grubby little mitts on every single *Magic* card? Well then, here's how you go about it:

On the next page is a list of 50 things to collect, shoot and answer. Each item has a point value next to it. Your mission—should you choose to accept it—is to collect as many points as possible by snagging the items, taking the photos, etc. When you've done all you can do, so that you can't do no more, dump all your stuff in one box—make sure that's **ONE** box—and send it to us. Be sure to include the scavenger hunt checklist (or a photocopy of it, if you don't want to mess up your magazine) with the items checked off. And you get five points just for filling the list out. The person with the highest point total wins the grand prize. In the case of a tie, we'll choose randomly. We'll take the next highest 100 totals as runners-up, and they'll score some cool *Magic* swag as well.

GRAND PRIZE:

1 One lucky son-of-a-bottle gnome will win one of every *Magic* card, from the Black Lotus to Yavimaya Wurm. That's over 3,300 cards!

RUNNERS UP

100 A hundred of the second-place finishers will score whatever we've managed to accumulate around the office over the last 50 issues, including *Magic* T-shirts, *Magic* booster packs, oversized *Magic* cards and more!

STUFF TO FIND FOR POINTS:

- Anything to do with a cheesy '80s TV show (3)
- Baseball card from the 1970s (1)
- Beach ball (2)
- Bizarre postcard (2)
- Bumper sticker with the word "frog" on it (4)
- Business card from a proctologist, urologist or gynecologist (5)
- Cannon piece from *Risk* (3)
- Cheesy romance novel (2)
- Crown from Burger King (2)
- Deck of cards with Jesus as the art on the card backs (5)
- Discount coupon for eggs (2)
- Drink coaster with non-English writing on it (3)
- Fake vampire teeth. Minus 10 points if they're used. (3)
- Indian Red Crayola with the wrapper (3)
- Left-handed scissors (2)
- Magnet in the shape of a cartoon character (4)
- Mexican jumping bean. Double the points if it's still jumping when we get it. (4)
- Nerf product (2)
- Newspaper story about Satan or demons (3)
- Non-six-sided die (1)
- Oddly-shaped soap (3)
- Packet of geranium seeds (3)
- Packet of unused sea monkeys (3)
- Picture of Elvis (2)
- Place-mat from a restaurant with a picture of fried clams on it (5)

- Polka-dotted sock (5)
- Popular song you've rewritten with lyrics about gaming (3)
- Recipe, photocopied from a book, where a bug is an ingredient (5)
- Rubber lizard (2)
- Silver Lego brick (4)
- Something with the Canadian flag on it (2)
- Temporary tattoo of a monkey (4)
- 3-D glasses (5)
- Ticket stub from "The Phantom Menace" (4)
- Transparent rubber "Super Ball" (4)
- Two-color tennis ball (4)

- You, dressed crazy, reading *InQuest* in a public place (3)

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER FOR POINTS:

- How do you decide which color goes first in chess? (2)
- What is President Bill Clinton's middle name? (2)
- What is the Prisoner's number on the television show "The Prisoner"? (3)
- What month and year did *Magic* first hit store shelves? (2)
- Where in California do the swallows always return? (4)
- Who is the NFL's all-time rushing leader? (2)
- Who produced the television specials "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and "The Hobbit"? (3)
- Who wrote "Superman: The Movie" and "The Godfather"? (3)

PHOTOS TO SHOOT FOR POINTS:

- Hot chick with *Magic* card or roleplaying game module (4)
- Sibling or friend in compromising position (3)
- Three squirrels (5)
- You and six people on a bed in a department store. One bonus point for each person more than six. (5)
- You hugging a fast-food restaurant manager (4)

CONTEST DEADLINE
JUNE 30, 1999

"THE INQUEST GAMER SCAVENGER HUNT"

NAME	DATE OF BIRTH
ADDRESS	
CITY	STATE
PHONE NUMBER (WITH AREA CODE)	ZIP
E-MAIL ADDRESS (IF YA GOTTS ONE)	

1. SEND EVERYTHING IN ONE PACKAGE. IF YOU SEND THEM SEPARATELY, WE'LL TOTAL YOUR POINTS SEPARATELY AND YOU WON'T HAVE A CHANCE.
2. INCLUDE THE "OFFICIAL SCAVENGER HUNT CHECKLIST" PRINTED ABOVE OR A PHOTOCOPY. IT'S WORTH FIVE POINTS JUST TO FILL IT OUT.
3. DO NOT SEND MULTIPLES OF EACH ITEM; YOU CAN ONLY SCORE THE POINTS ONCE.
4. SEND YOUR ENTRY TO:

"INQUEST GAMER SCAVENGER HUNT"
C/O WIZARD ENTERTAINMENT
151 WELLS AVE.
CONGERS, NY 10920-0118

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LEGAL TEXT

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For a list of winners, available after July 24, 1999, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: "InQuest Gamer Scavenger Hunt" Contest Winners List, c/o Wizard Entertainment Group, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118.

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Killer Decks

Bayou Lightning II by Len Blado

Speed kills. No other *Magic* mantra is both as true and as timeless. Four years ago, the first issue of *InQuest* would inaugurate this space with that simple premise. In honor of our anniversary 50th issue, we'll revisit that very first Killer Deck, "Bayou Lightning," updating the rather elegant concept of crushing your opponent under an avalanche of oversized creatures.

How to Play

In the original version, "Bayou Lightning" had a good deal of miscellaneous effects designed to disrupt or annoy its opponent like *Mind Twist* and *Strip Mine*. In the redesign, much of that has been taken out, either for lack of corollary effects in Standard or to simply streamline the deck. What's left is brutally potent creatures that land on the table before most opponents are ready to deal with them.

This means carefully deploying a mix of mana and threats in the early game. The deck is designed to really start moving around turn three, with earlier turns consumed by mana development. Normally, the first turn will consist of playing a land and either an enchantment-destroying *Elvish Lyryst* or a *Thran Turbine*. The *Lyryst* allows you to play a *Priest Of Titania* on the second turn and have a fair stockpile of mana on the third turn, with the *Priest's* ability to generate one green mana for every elf in play. If you don't see the elven mana coming on-line, then the *Turbine* might be a better play, as the colorless mana it provides during your upkeep will help pay the echo costs on many of your creatures, and increase the rate at which you can bring them out. In either case, you should usually develop the mana base first and begin bringing out the heavy hitters past turn two.

You should strive for a balance between developing your offense and keeping your opponent at bay. The *Simian Grunts* can be used as a form of creature removal, since they can be played as an instant and become surprise blockers. If your opponent is wary of such a tactic or his creatures can't be blocked by ground creatures, then *Engineered Plague*, which can give all creatures of



NO BALLS? But that doesn't stop Rancor from pounding your opponent.

one type -1/-1, should be able to deal with them. And if the game goes on long enough, you should eventually reach the point where you're ready to play the big, bad boy of the deck—the 7/7 *Verdant Force*, which creates a 1/1 green creature during each upkeep.

Even though the *Verdant Force* never appear, the deck can generate such enormous surges of mana and has so much trample, that it's fairly easy to simply *Howl From Beyond* for +20/+0 and kill an opponent in one fell swoop. One good trick is to tap a *Gaea's Cradle* for mana, and then sacrifice it to *Crop Rotation* to get a second *Gaea's Cradle*, which can then also be tapped for mana.

Such schemes work wonderfully against other fast, aggressive decks. However, control decks will likely hold back countermagic just for such occasions. Against permission decks, your best weapons are the *Simian Grunts*. Since they can be played as an instant, you can play them at the end of your opponent's turn, forcing them to tap out if they want to counter them, and leaving you free to play spells during your turn. The

the deck

ARTIFACT

4 *Thran Turbine*

BLACK

4 *Engineered Plague*
2 *Howl From Beyond*

GREEN

4 *Albino Troll*
2 *Crop Rotation*
4 *Cradle Guard*
2 *Elvish Lyryst*
4 *Priest Of Titania*
4 *Rancor*
4 *Simian Grunts*

2 *Uktabi Orangutan*
2 *Verdant Force*

LANDS

2 *Ancient Tomb*
10 *Forest*
2 *Gaea's Cradle*
4 *Thran Quarry*
4 *Treetop Village*

SIDEBOARD

3 *Dark Banishing*
2 *Elvish Lyryst*
4 *Gloom*
4 *Multan's Presence*
2 *Uktabi Orangutan*

SUBSTITUTIONS

Verdant Force → *Rootbreaker Wurm*
Thran Quarry → *Swamp*
Gaea's Cradle → *Forest*



What's our favorite color other than purple? Well, green and red have appeared in the most of our killer decks, at 25 times each. We've also done a mono-color deck for each color and only once (issue #33) has a killer deck included all five colors.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS



THREE'S COMPANY Jack and his girlfriends didn't age as well as *InQuest's* original Killer Deck.

Treetop Village creature-lands are also a significant threat, as they cannot be countered.

Weaknesses

The deck is enormously strong against most conventional decks. With such a broad base of fast threats, it handles control and aggressive decks with equal aplomb. However, two strategies can cause considerable trouble. The first is mana denial. With 12 echo creatures and four land creatures, successfully destroying or locking down your mana means that a good deal of your deck is inefficient at best and unplayable at worst. However, since the deck generates such fast, large threats, normally your opponent will not be able to create a situation in which it is to their benefit to use all their mana to deny your mana.

The other major trouble spot is with combo decks, which ignore the opponent in search of some game-winning combo. Without any disruption tactics, you've simply got to put them "on the clock" and force them to attempt their combo earlier than they really desire. So long as you can keep control of the game's tempo, you have a good shot at beating them before they can assemble what they need to win.

How to Sideboard

The sideboard provides additional artifact, creature and enchantment destruction so the deck can be fine-tuned to deal with these specific threats. By swapping between the main deck elements and the sideboard elements, you can subtly alter the mix of these various weapons to address virtually any deck. So long as you maintain no more than six to eight black cards in the deck, you shouldn't have problems with generating the appropriate mana.

The last two sideboard cards, Gloom and Multani's Presence, are designed to fight against very specific decks. Gloom is primarily meant as an answer to highly defensive decks and decks with *Armageddon*; the main deck's Engineered Plagues should be sufficient to crush *White Weenie* when combined with the enormous creature complement. Multani's Presence, which allows you to draw a card for every one of yours countered, is swapped in for cards such as *Howl From Beyond* and *Crop Rotation* which are unlikely to be very useful against countermagic.

If you're tired of seeing endless rehashes of the same old deck, then maybe you should break out some old school tech and teach your opponents that the best concepts are sometimes the oldest. ■

Len Blado wants everyone to know that four years ago he was trading Black Lotus for Basalt Monoliths and loving every minute of it.



GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

They keep telling me that there is no grand 50th issue gala *InQuest* celebration and that they're all staying home that night to sort *Spellfire* cards. Meaning that I wasted my time getting an inflatable life-size replica of the Taj Mahal, a donut cannon and a copy of the ultra-rare *Ogre LARP* (the traditional door prizes). But if there were a party celebrating four years and two months of *InQuest*, it might go something like this... ■ *Len Blado, Party Crasher*

GUEST LIST

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Angus Mackenzie | 1 Rasputin Dreamweaver |
| 2 Frenetic Efreet | 1 Rubinia Soulsinger |
| 1 Guiding Spirit | 3 Wandering Mage |
| 1 Gwendlyn di Corci | 1 Wood Sage |
| 0 Phelddagrif | |

HIGHLIGHTS

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 3 Delirium | 4 Prismatic Boon |
| 1 Flooded Woodlands | 1 Squandered Resources |
| 1 Grim Feast | 2 Spontaneous Combustion |
| 2 Lobotomy | |

THE NEXT MORNING

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 Fiery Justice | 2 Misfortune |
| 1 Hymn Of Rebirth | 2 Purgatory |
| 1 Malignant Growth | 4 Reparations |

LOCATIONS

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Ghost Town | 2 Treetop Village |
| 2 Hall Of Mists | 1 Unholy Citadel |
| 4 Polluted Mire | 2 Wasteland |
| 3 Scorched Ruins | 2 Winding Canyon |
| 3 Smoldering Crater | 4 Wizards' School |

More **KILLER DECKS** for your other favorite CCGs →

Killer Decks 2

Fist Fulla Pokémon by Rich Lipman

One of the best ways to win a *Pokémon* duel is to keep your opponent off balance by using quick effective attacks and disabling the opposing pokémon's ability to fight back. This deck features lightning fast pokémon that pack a wallop—along with the tricks you'll need to bring the match to a satisfying end.

Deck Concept

Our "Fist Fulla Pokémon" deck features several quick-start pokémon capable of attacking with only one energy and more that inflict lethal damage with two or three. The hard-punching Hitmonchan and the shockingly quick Electabuzz are the headliners of this deck. Hitmonchan packs a 20 point damage attack with only one energy and can dish out 40 with three energy. Electabuzz has a 10 point attack which can paralyze for one energy or an amazing 30 point attack for only two. And because they both have 70 hit points, they're hard to knock out.

The evolving pokémon Machop and Diglett can deliver 20 and 10 damage with only one energy and Diglett can do 30 for only two. Evolve them into Machamp and Dugtrio and they can prove a threat to anything your opponent can muster. Their attacks are in the hefty 60 and 70 point range which will even hurt creatures which are resistant to their attacks. The trainer cards in the deck include plenty of card drawing to make sure you get enough Energy as well as a few tricks to keep your opponent guessing.

How to Play

Obviously, you need to start the beatings right away with this deck. A first turn Hitmonchan, Electabuzz or even Machop can get you going quickly. They all have decent attacks that only cost a single energy. Once you have your starting pokémon charged up, begin working on another so you'll be able to strike fast. Don't be afraid to leave your pokémon out to die if they can inflict that extra damage. This deck needs to keep the damage coming and you should be dealing faster than your opponent.



IT'S ELECTRIC! Electabuzz, with his power attack, is a strong starter.

If your opponent gets out a B.F.P.—Big Fat Pokémon—with a lot of hit points, you've got two choices: beat it down or use the Gust Of Wind to bring up one of his lesser critters so you can squish it and gain the prize. Obviously, the latter deal is the way to go.

Gust Of Wind is a major component in your bag of tricks, by the way. At some point in most duels, your opponent will play a scrub pokémon to his bench as the first stage of a scary and powerful evolution. You can force it into battle right away with a well-timed Gust, earning not only a knockout and prize, but guaranteeing that your opponent's stage one and two pokés languish in his hand rather than menacing you from the table.

Another key use of Gust Of Wind is to force into battle the powerful pokémon who can use their awesome powers while on the bench. For example, many *Pokémon* decks pack Alakazam, whose damage swap is an amazingly useful power. During most games your opponent will leave it on the bench to do it's dirty work in safety while all the damage you do to his active pokémon gets moved around. A Gust will bring Alakazam front and center where

the deck

FIGHTING POKÉMON

- 3 Diglett
- 2 Dugtrio
- 4 Hitmonchan
- 4 Machop
- 2 Machoke
- 1 Machamp

ELECTRIC POKÉMON

- 4 Electabuzz

TRAINERS

- 4 Bill
- 3 Energy Removal
- 3 Gust Of Wind
- 2 Professor Oak

- 2 Super Energy Removal
- 1 Super Potion

ENERGY

- 8 Electric
- 17 Fighting



the non-killer deck THEME DECK



WEED WHACKERS AND BUG KILLERS

Gardening is a popular way to spend the time. Nothing's finer on the warm breezy days of early summer than tending a festive garden of healthful vegetables and lovely flowers, right?

Get real! Kicking weed and insect-pest ass is where it's at! This *Pokémon* deck presents a whole host of annoying garden vermin with which to task your opponent. So get out that weed whacker and go to town!

You have lots of ways to bug your opponent. From the powerful Venusaur, which can whack almost any *Pokémon* in one swipe, to the Beedrill, who can plant a nasty sting on anything. Sure, getting these second stage beasts into play can be tricky but with the addition of a gardening expert like the *Pokémon* Breeder it can be a snap.

Maintaining a garden can be hard work. If some of your *Pokémon* become damaged, just use your Venusaur to move the energy to other *Pokémon*.

■ Rich Lipman

POKÉMON

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 4 Weeds (Hairy Bug <i>Pokémon</i>) | 4 Bulbasaur (Seed <i>Pokémon</i>) |
| 3 Kakuna (Cocoon <i>Pokémon</i>) | 3 Ivysaur (Seed <i>Pokémon</i>) |
| 2 Beedrill (Poison Bee <i>Pokémon</i>) | 2 Venusaur (Seed <i>Pokémon</i>) |
| 3 Tangela (Vine <i>Pokémon</i>) | 4 Caterpie (Worm <i>Pokémon</i>) |
| | 2 Metapod (Cocoon <i>Pokémon</i>) |

TRAINERS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 Devolution Spray (Bug Killer) | (Gardening Expert) |
| 2 Item Finder (You never can find the right tool when you need it.) | 1 Maintenance (Keeps your tools nice and shiny) |
| 1 <i>Pokémon</i> Breeder | 2 Super Potion (Helps Plants Grow) |

ENERGY

- 25 Grass Energy



GOD OF ARM WRESTLING When Machop gets his four meathooks into a *Pokémon*, it's all over, baby.

you can try to beat it down. Same thing applies to the other *Pokémon* whose powers work really well from the bench.

Your Energy Removal and Super Energy Removal are keys to strategically keeping your opponent's *Pokémon* neutered. Usually while your opponent is putting up small fry or wall type *Pokémon* like Chansey or Onix he is preparing something a little more lethal.

You can combine your Gust Of Wind with Energy Removal to force up one of his deadlier *Pokémon* while at the same time making it unable to strike back due to energy problems. This should give you time to kill it off while it's stranded on the front lines without enough energy to retreat. If your opponent has built up a loaded Charizard or Zapdos a well-timed Energy Removal can buy you a turn or two to deal with it before it starts turning your *Pokémon* into snacks.

Use the Super Potion late in the game to keep your big *Pokémon* on the board, especially when your opponent thinks he can gain the upper hand by knocking it out. Save it for just the right occasion to keep the poké-beats coming. It works well on a damaged Machoke to strengthen his karate chop.

Weaknesses

Pokémon resistant to fighting are a major problem for this deck. Use Electabuzz to fight them or use the Gust Of Wind to push them back to the bench and bring up a more "edible" *Pokémon*. If you have to face a fight-resistant *Pokémon*, don't waste energy trying to get in 10 points of damage with Hitmonchan. Prepare a big damage Dugtrio or Machop to take it on.

Save your Energy Removal for an opponent with a huge energy requirement or to give your *Pokémon* an extra turn of life. A starting Chansey or Onix may take a while to hack down since they have high hit points. If you can't drive a *Pokémon* away with a Gust Of Wind, you will need to just keep whacking on it and strengthen the guy on your bench. Those "wall" *Pokémon* can take a licking, but with Energy Removal and Gust Of Wind, you should be able to cope.

There are many different types of successful and fun *Pokémon* decks you can build. This one is fast, lethal and capable of quickly eliminating your opponent's threats. If it reflects your play style, you should have a lot of fun with it. Don't forget though, one of the most fun parts of *Pokémon* is building your own deck. Experiment and keep trying to achieve *Pokémon* mastery.

Rich Lipman is trying to convince people that he wasn't the model for Chansey in spite of the obvious resemblance.

DECK BUILDING

101

Weenies

by Jeremy Smith

Hard, fast and furious. Those are three words that'll run through your opponent's mind as you run him over with a swarm of green weenies. You'll be pounding him into the ground before he knows what hit him.

Step 1: Theme

This deck revolves around a horde of small, quick creatures and several spells that help beef them up and hasten your opponent's demise. He'll constantly be forced to block or kill off your creatures or face being run over very quickly. You'll often be able to play out all the creatures in your hand by the third turn and finish off your adversary within five turns.

Step 2: Colors

While quality weenie hordes can be assembled in pretty much every color, I chose to go with green for this deck due to its great ability to speed up mana production and get creatures into play a turn or two earlier than the other colors. With the Urza's Cycle, green also gained a wealth of echo creatures, which trade off extra power and toughness for a slightly cheaper casting cost that must be paid again on the turn after being cast. This trade-off usually ends up being quite worthwhile.

Step 3: Creatures

The first things you'll need for this deck are creatures—lots of them. When including creatures in a deck, it's important to follow a mana curve. This means that you should include a larger number of smaller, lower-casting cost creatures than larger, more expensive ones in order to ensure being able to cast them earlier in the game and use up all of your mana each turn. Having lots of cheap creatures also leaves more room open for paying the echo costs of some of your creatures.

For one-casting cost creatures, I went with four Llanowar Elves, two Pouncing Jaguars, two Elvish Lyrists and two Scavenger Folk. The Llanowars should be standard in any heavy-green deck, as their ability of tapping for one green mana is one of green's staples and helps speed decks up immensely. The Jaguars, 2/2 echoers, are a bargain at only one mana and leave room for you to cast a second-turn creature while still being able to pay the echo cost. The Lyrists and Folk let you eliminate nasty enchantments and artifacts while serving double-duty as 1/1 creatures.

At the two-mana level, there are four Priests Of Titania, four Muscle Slivers and two Albino Trolls. With



CLAWS AND EFFECT By the third turn this deck can spit out a 9/9 Pouncing Jaguar.

the deck GREEN MEANIES

GREEN CREATURES

- 2 Albino Troll
- 2 Cradle Guard
- 2 Elvish Lyrist
- 4 Llanowar Elves
- 4 Muscle Sliver
- 2 Pouncing Jaguar
- 4 Priest Of Titania
- 2 Scavenger Folk
- 4 Simian Grunts

GREEN SPELLS

- 2 Crop Rotation
- 2 Hurricane
- 3 Might Of Oaks
- 2 Overrun
- 4 Rancor

LANDS

- 17 Forest
- 2 Gaea's Cradle
- 2 Treetop Village

In issue #7 loyal fan Karen Weatherbee snagged a complete set of *Magic* cards for creating the coolest original card among thousands of entries. The black interrupt, Changeling read, "Gain control of target creature as it is being cast. Player casting creature gains a Changeling counter. Treat Chageling as a 0/1 black creature."



ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

HONOR ROLL

10 elves in the deck, the Priests will often be able to tap for two, three or more mana each turn. The slivers are decent at 2/2 for two mana, but they have the added bonus of making each other +1/+1 bigger for each extra one in play. Of course, if you run up against a sliver deck, you should probably sideboard them out. Finally, the Albino Troll is a fat 3/3 regenerating echoer and will be bigger than anything else your opponent can cast within a similar time frame.

Rounding out the creatures, there are two Cradle Guards and four Simian Grunts. The Guards, like the Trolls, are huge for their cost, and their trample ability will make your opponent think twice about chump-blocking them. The 3/4 Grunts are the closest things that green has to spot-creature kill, since they can be cast anytime you can play an instant and can take out incoming attackers. You'll also be able to attack with the Grunts right away, too, if you cast them during your opponent's turn.

What didn't make it? Well, Wall Of Blossoms and Mul-tani's Acolyte, while having the nice benefit of replacing themselves with another card, don't offer the power-and-toughness-to-casting cost ratios that the other creatures do. Acridian, while decent, generally is slightly inferior to the Albino Troll—though it's a fine substitute should you be short on Trolls. Wild Dogs, while also a bargain, are too situational and can often hurt you more than they'd help you. Hidden Gibbons (I count them as creatures), Spike Weavers and Argothian Wurms can work well, but they're rare and tough to get a hold of easily.

Step 4: Spells

Since there are so many creatures in this deck, there are few spells, and most of these simply give your creatures more punch. Rancor, a bargain at one green mana, gives a creature +2/+0 and trample and returns to your hand if the enchanted creature dies. Overrun and Might Of Oaks simply make your creatures huge. While they're expensive, they can be game-enders and usually won't be tough to cast with all your extra mana sources. Since the Might is rare, you can also substitute in Giant Growth or Symbiosis if you don't have any.

Lastly, there are two Hurricanes, which can provide defense against flyers as well as deliver the knockout blow to your opponent, and two Crop Rotations, which let you fetch Gaea's Cradles and Treetop Villages when you need them.

Step 5: Lands

Since this is a straight green deck, the land choice is limited. Twenty-one total lands seemed to be about the right ratio for this deck, so I went with 17 Forests, two Gaea's Cradles and two Treetop Villages. The Cradles can provide huge amounts of mana, and the Villages can double as both mana sources and 3/3 trampers. If you have them, Mox Diamonds are also an option.

You'll be able to thwack your opponent around quite a bit with this pack of nasty weenies. Three more words you'll put into his mind? Game, set, match!

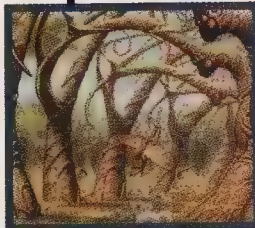
Jeremy Smith (jeremysm@roundtable.cif.rochester.edu) wonders if an article about green weenies warrants an "R" rating.

Here are the choice cards for this deck and how to play them most effectively:



ALBINO TROLL:

This and the other two echo creatures—Pouncing Jaguar and Cradle Guard—give you a huge amount of bang for your buck. A 3/3 regenerator for two mana is nothing to sneeze at.



GAEA'S CRADLE:

With 26 creatures in this deck, you'll almost always be able to tap this for more than one green mana. This is key in casting a quick Overrun or in blasting away your opponent with a large Hurricane.



MIGHT OF OAKS:

The +7/+7 bonus this card gives is just gigantic. All you need to do is get through one creature unblocked—an easy task for this deck—and you'll be puttin' serious hurt on your opponent in no time.



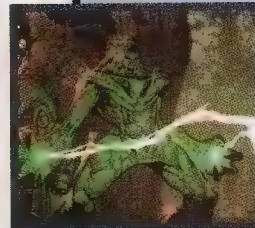
OVERRUN:

This turns an army of weenies into a battalion of fatties in no time. Since it gives trample, it ensures that damage will still go through even when your creatures are blocked, and it can easily end a game.



PRIEST OF TITANIA:

Like Gaea's Cradle, the Priest has the possibility of tapping for large amounts of mana. It tends to draw fire away from you and your other creatures, and doubles as part of your weenie horde.



RANCOR:

One of the few tournament-quality creature enchantments, this card is incredibly versatile. It can make a creature as small as a Llanowar Elf something to be feared, and you'll still get it back should its target die.



SIMIAN GRUNTS:

You'll often want to hold these in your hand until a smaller attacker comes barreling your way. Even if you don't pay the echo, you've killed a creature for three mana, and if you do, your opponent will have to deal with them right away.

DEAD MAN'S HAND

THIS MONTH'S CHALLENGE TIME FLIES

You can't WIN.

In 25 issues, Eugene T. Dudley, the world's worst *Magic* player, has been through it all. He's pumped his Atog to high heaven, captured the affection of the Silver Queen and even found a use for Sorrow's Path. Granted, he used it to kill himself, but it was a use nonetheless. So now, two years after his big *InQuest* debut, Eugene is looking to pull off the ultimate feat—50 straight turns in honor of 50 issues of *InQuest*.

Squaring off against his old nemesis, Clint "The Fist" Canyon, Eugene has managed to get several pieces of the engine into his hand. Unfortunately, his Necropotence—and Clint's direct damage—have dragged him down to one life. Can Eugene really take 50 extra turns in a row? Probably not. After all, we are talking about a guy who thinks the Brown Ouphe is a killer card. Heck, he's so brain-baffled by his options that he's not even sure what to do next. So help him out, and see how many extra turns in a row you can put together.

Keep in mind the following:

- It's the beginning of Eugene's main phase. He's at one life and knockin' on death's door.
- Thanks to the Necropotence you don't have to worry about running out of cards. Of course, since Eugene is only at one life, you don't have to worry about drawing any either.
- The Time Vault has a time counter on it. Note that if you skip a turn to untap the Vault, you'll break the streak of consecutive turns.
- Remember, you don't have to cast everything during one turn. Since you'll be taking several turns in a row you can spread your casting over multiple turns.
- It figures that the only creature Eugene's managed to get into play is an Ornithopter, so fear not—there's no threat of him notching a victory. Eugene has never legally won a *Magic* duel. You think that's gonna change any time soon?

Photo by Paul Schiraldi. *Magic: the Gathering* is a registered trademark of Wizards of the Coast.

HAND

- 1 Fork
- 1 Recall
- 1 Regrowth
- 1 Time Bomb
- 1 Time Ebb
- 1 Time Walk
- 1 Time Warp

CARDS IN PLAY

- 1 Crystal Chimes
- 1 Necropotence
- 1 Ornithopter
- 4 Second Chance
- 1 Time Vault

LAND

- 2 Tropical Island
- 2 Underground Sea
- 3 Volcanic Island

ENTER THE CONTEST

Mail in your step-by-step solution to:

DEAD MAN'S HAND

TIME FLIES

C/O INQUEST
PO BOX 118
CONGERS, NY 10920-0118



The winner, randomly chosen from all correct entries, will snag a box of *Urza's Destiny*. All entries must be postmarked no later than May 29, 1999

LAST MONTH'S "WAKE UP!" SOLUTION:

Your mission: Activate all five sleeping sorceries, which began the turn in play. The only way to do it is to take care of everything during your upkeep, so here's how it's done.

- 1 Tap all lands for mana. You take 5 damage and your opponent gains control of your Ghazban Ogre. (2 green, 1 red, 1 white, 2 colorless mana in pool.)
- 2 Cast: Harrow and sacrifice a land to put two lands into play. (1 green, 1 red, 1 white, 1 colorless.)
- 3 Tap the Witch Engine to add four black mana to your pool. Your opponent gains control of the Engine. (4 black, 1 green, 1 red, 1 white, 1 colorless.)
- 4 Cast: Fling and sacrifice the Eviscerator to do 5 damage to yourself. Use Penance to prevent the damage, putting the Gilded Drake on top of your library. (4 black, 1 green, 1 white.)
- 5 Activate Oath of Druids, bringing the Gilded Drake into play. Your opponent gains control of the Gilded Drake, you gain control of the Witch Engine.
- 6 Cast: Burst of Energy to untap the Witch Engine and then tap it for four black mana. Your opponent gains control

of Engine. (8 black, 1 green.)

7 Let the Yavimsaya Granger die by failing to pay its echo cost.

8 Cast: Repopulate to shuffle the Eviscerator and Granger into your library. (7 black.)

9 Your opponent has three creatures, so you can activate the **Defense of the Heart**. Search your library for the Eviscerator and the Granger and put them into play. You lose 5 life and may search your library for any basic land and put it into play.

10 There are now five creatures in play, so activate the **Planar Collapse** to destroy all creatures.

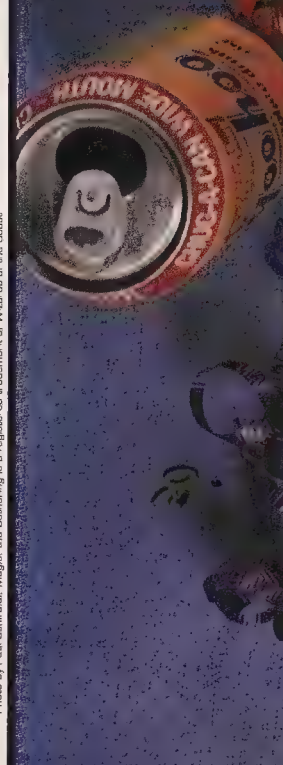
11 There are now seven lands in play, so activate the **Impending Disaster** to destroy all lands

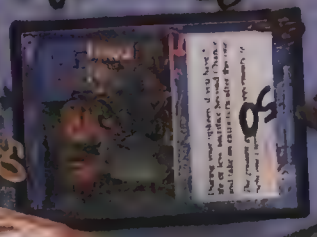
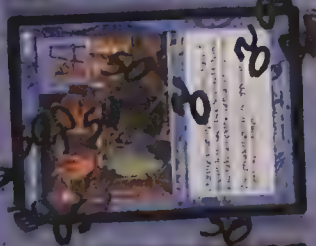
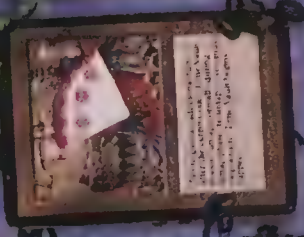
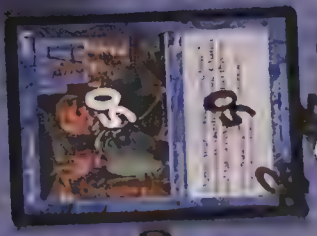
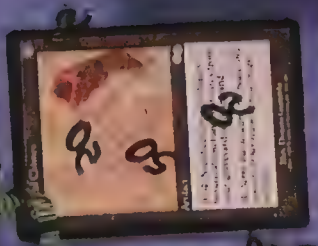
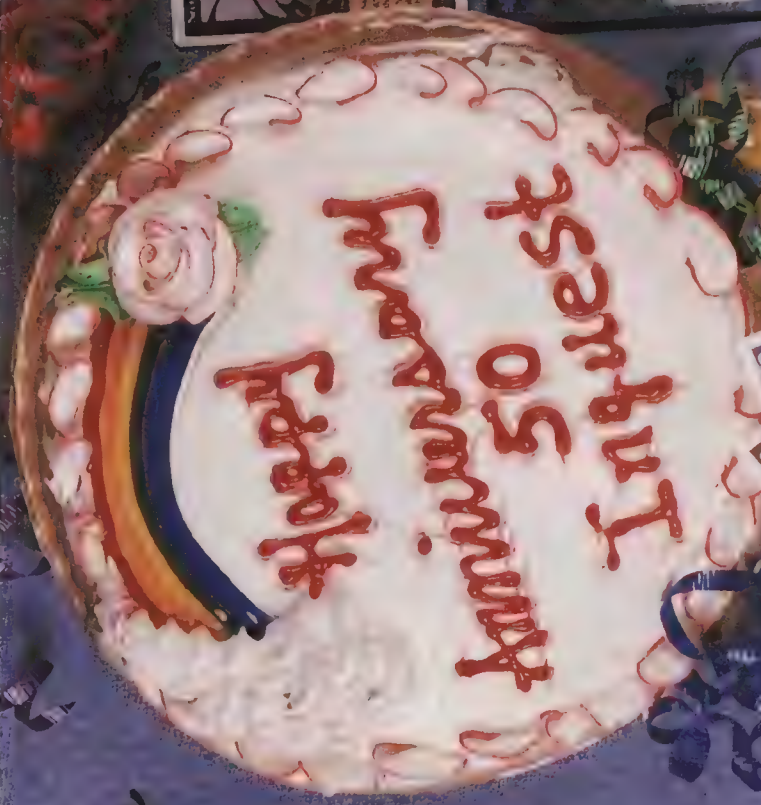
12 Your hand is empty, so you may activate the **Blink of Madness**.

13 Finally, you are now at five life, so you activate the **Second Chance**

14 Take seven damage of burn from the leftover Witch Engine mana and die. Ah well.

TO INFINITY AND BEYOND! How many consecutive turns can you spin out with this spread of goodies?





BASIC TRAINING

Star Wars CCG

by John Kaufeld

With a game as rich and flexible as the *Star Wars CCG*, the strategic possibilities never end. But whether you battle in space, blaze through the clouds or clash on the ground, a few basic tips will boost your playing prowess from Outer Rim-wannabe to hero of the Rebellion—or to Grand Moff of the Empire, if that's more your style.

PUBLISHER: Decipher, Inc.

GENRE: Science fiction

RELEASE: December 1995

PACKAGING: 60-card starter decks; 9-card booster packs

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$8.95 per starter; \$2.50 per booster

BASIC STRATEGY

Before you do anything else, burn these three magic words into



Which article has generated the most controversy? Hands down, it's "Games That Suck" from *InQuest* #29. The feature which got the most fan mail? "Contest of Champions" from issue #15, where cartoon fantasy characters like Elric vs. King Arthur and Cthulhu vs. Sauron duked it out.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

your memory: "Read the card." Believe it or not, this simple adage takes your playing skill to a much higher level. Winning a game isn't merely a matter of playing the right card at the right time. It's also a matter of remembering special abilities of your existing cards and applying those abilities when they help the most. Practice before a game and live it while playing. Even the best players forget to read the cards from time to time—and usually end up kicking themselves for it.

For instance, Don't Get Cocky gives the Light Side two extra battle destiny draws if Luke and Han fight side-by-side in battle. That's a great benefit, no doubt about it. But that's not all the card does. Read further in the card's game text and you find one of Decipher's famous "OR" clauses. In this case, Don't Get Cocky also lets the Light Side destroy a TIE/LN immediately after the Dark Side declares a battle at that system. This makes the card useful whether or not Han and Luke ever emerge from the Reserve Deck.

The "read your cards" rule applies to your opponent's cards, too. When your opponent plays an interrupt or effect or uses the game text of some other card in play, it's perfectly legal to take a moment and read the card's text for yourself. After all, your opponent is human, too; he could make a mistake in the heat of the game, and accidentally play a card that seems appropriate, but doesn't quite work. Powerful defense cards like Too Cold For Speeders and system-wide effects, such as Sundown, only operate under certain conditions or locations. It only takes a moment to make sure your

opponent's plays match the text on his cards, but that moment might save the game for you.

Pay attention when your opponent draws a destiny card. Don't simply focus on the destiny number. Granted, that's why he drew the card, but he's also showing you something from his deck; it's an important clue. Pay particular attention if it's an interrupt or effect, since those cards give you excellent insight into your opponent's strategy.

Don't be afraid to look up things in the rules or glossary during the game. If you aren't sure about a

definition—there's a big difference between locations, systems and sites—revised game text for a card or anything else, consult the rules. Likewise, if you play in a tournament, ask the tournament director for a ruling if you and your opponent disagree on how part of the game should work.

Once you build these basics into your playing habits, begin working on the more advanced technique of tracking cards as they move through your life force. Don't do anything unseemly—like say, *cheat*—but do pay attention to the cards passing through your life force piles. Specifically, get a sense of where the high destiny cards are lurking and when they might turn up again.

Here's a simple example of the technique. It's late in the game, and you have 14 cards in your life force. You activate 10 Force this turn, leaving 4 cards in your reserve deck. Using Reactor Terminal/Traffic Control, you move a Restraining Bolt and Caller, which are both destiny 6, from your hand into the used pile. You continue the turn, eventually placing 7 more cards—6 from the Force pile and one from the reserve deck—onto the used pile.

At the end of the turn, when you recycle the used pile, those two destiny 6 cards move to the bottom of your reserve deck, buried under exactly 10 cards. Now you must plan carefully. By activating exactly the right amount of Force, you can manipulate where the two high destiny cards sit in your reserve deck. To bring the cards to the top of the reserve deck, activate 10 Force. Now you have two great battle destiny draws! Activate 9 cards instead and you left space for a destiny draw to use with an interrupt or effect which, in turn, leaves the pair of destiny 6 cards ready to draw.

As you can see, this technique takes some practice, but it's much easier to learn than you might think. Practice your strategies, learn to plan how much Force your game actions require and then blow away the competition as the cards come up exactly the way you want them to appear.

Since everything in *SW CCG* happens during specific phases, take a close look at these building blocks of your turn. Make a habit of going through every phase of the turn, even if you apparently have nothing happening during that phase. I actually say the phase names aloud so there's no question about what I'm doing: "Activate, 10 Force, control, no controlled locations, deploy..."

Photo courtesy Everett Collection. Star Wars CCG™ & © Lucasfilm. Decipher a subsidiary of Wizards of the Coast.

YAVIN A GOOD TIME Put our tips to use and fly to victory.

CARD ANATOMY

CARD TYPE ICON: Classifies the card by type—Rebel, Imperial, starship, etc.

LORE: General background text about the card. Special characteristics—bounty hunter, leader, smuggler, spy, etc.—appear here in bold text.

GAME TEXT: Details card abilities, restrictions and other information. Pay close attention to everything in this area of each card.

FORFEIT: Value when losing the card in battle.

DEPLOY: Cost to deploy the card.



NAME: Card name or title.

DESTINY NUMBER: Used to resolve battles, weapon shots and other game actions, such as interrupt and effect results.

EXPANSION SET ICON: Identifies the expansion set containing this card. No icon appears on *Premiere* cards.

ADDITIONAL ICONS: Displays character skills—pilot, warrior, permanent weapon, etc.—and special feature icons, such as independent starship, Scamp link, selective creature.

ATTRIBUTES: Lists values for card power, ability, armor, maneuver, hyperspeed, land-speed and Force attunement where applicable. Creature cards include defense details.

BASIC TRAINING

Since your opponent can technically take an action at any point in your turn, moving through each phase in a deliberate way prevents him from saying "I know you just declared battle, but I was going to do something at the end of your deploy phase."

Although it harkens back to the "read your cards" mantra, pay attention to cards that take action only during certain phases. Figrin D'an makes his bet during the control phase, which is also when Reflection retrieves a card from your lost pile. Sniper fires a weapon during the control phase, but it can't if you don't remember to play the card until halfway through the deploy phase.

Finally, when drawing at the end of your turn, remember to leave some cards in the Force pile to pay for "react" movements during your opponent's turn. A well-timed react drastically messes up your opponent's carefully crafted plans.

DECK-BUILDING

Playing the game requires a solid deck, and as with everything else in *SW CCG*, there's a definite science and art to deck-building. Both science and art? Yes, quite true. It's a science, because certain card combinations show up regularly in successful decks, which means research and testing leads to better decks. But that's not the whole story. There's an art to deckbuilding as well, because a good deck plays out like a good story with plots and sub-plots building to a final victorious climax.

When starting your new deck, begin with a single goal in mind. Keep the goal simple and focus the deck around it. With so many cards in the various *SW CCG* sets, it's easy to get sidetracked by cool cards in your collection. Sure, you want to use them, but first they have to fit into your goal. If they don't, then leave them out or change the goal.

With the definite goal in mind, it's time to choose locations.



WALK DON'T RUN Paying close attention to cards previously played by your foe can win you the game.

Photo courtesy Foto Fantastico

in this, pay attention to how much Force each one generates for you and your opponent. Also watch the game text for the sites. A few innocent words like "Your characters present here are immune to attrition" make a lot of difference in the game. Look for sites that offer you good Force generation while providing few advantages to your opponent.

LAYOUT

EMPIRE SIDE OF THE TABLE: The Empire puts its cards up here.

LOCATIONS: Where the action happens. Gain Force, drain Force, move and battle here.

LIGHT SIDE OF THE TABLE: The Rebels play on this side of the locations. Cards representing characters, vehicles and equipment are played at the location sites.

DEPLOYED EFFECTS: Most effects in play go here. Others play on a particular character or location.

LIFE FORCE AND DECK PILE: Your Force pile, used pile, and reserve deck, which together represent your life force. Cards removed from the table or discarded from your hand go in the lost pile.

Photo by Pau Simre di



Who is *InQuest's* most prolific writer? Games Editor Jeff Hannes has had his name tagged to 138 articles, and that's including the many he's worked on as part of the "IQ Gamer staff."

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

Your deck goal and locations make up the map for the final step: Selecting the rest of the deck. You need cards that inflict damage on your opponent through Force drains, direct battle, etc.; cards that reduce or prevent damage given by your opponent, like *It Could Be Worse*; and one more group of cards, which I like to call "plot complications." These are the interrupts, effects, and other cards in your deck which change the flow of the game. They might prevent game actions, allow extra destiny draws or help you get cards into play, among other things. They make the game fun and are often the key to turning a game in your favor.

As you select cards, look for things that help when played by themselves, but that truly rock when working in combination with other cards. These combinations are the essence of the deckbuilding art. Nothing makes you prouder than when someone looks at your deck and says "Cool combo!"

The Rebel snowspeeders in the sample deck are an excellent combo example. By themselves, they're limited—low deploy cost, medium power and a decent destiny number. Combine them with some other cards, though, and watch them turn vicious. Wrist Comlink lets them move as a react to a battle or Force drain. CZ-3 helps them deploy as a react. ASP-707 makes them deploy for free. Combine those two droids together and you get snowspeeders that deploy for free as a react. Now, that's nasty!

Building the ultimate deck takes creativity, ingenuity, and skill—but most of all, it takes cards! Although "theme" tournaments, like *Decipher's Bepin* and *Beyond* events earlier this year, focus on cards from a particular expansion, most decks require a mix of cards from several sets. For instance, a *Rescue the Princess* objective deck requires locations and interrupts from *Premiere*, *A New Hope*, and *Special Edition*. Without the supporting cards, your cool objectives are nothing but trading stock.

Since each of the expansions focuses on a particular segment of the movies, it's easy to focus your purchases and stock up on the cards you need. Build a foundation for your collection by focusing on *Premiere*, *A New Hope*, and *Special Edition* cards. These sets include the main characters, great supporting cast members, all of the primary starships, and a ton of valuable interrupts and effects.

Add spice and themes to your decks with cards from the other sets. *Hoth* includes snowspeeders and walkers (which work great on any planet), while *Cloud City* adds bounty hunters, more ships, clouds, cloud cars, and the infamous carbon freezing chamber. Add more aliens and creatures to your deck with a trip to *Jabba's Palace*. Pick up some *Dagobah* packs for Dark Side space power and Light Side Jedi training.

THE SAGA CONTINUES

Don't forget about online trading and purchasing opportunities, either. For a start, check out the SWCCG area in the Mozilla Open Directory Project (http://dmoz.org/Games/Trading_Cards/Star_Wars_CCG/), the game-oriented newsgroups (specifically rec.games.trading-cards.marketplace), and the Decipher-sponsored discussion boards and mailing lists available on their website (<http://www.decipher.com/starwars/index.html>). If you use America Online, look at the CCG Headquarters inside the Gaming area (keyword GAMING).

John Kaufeld is hard at work on his next magnum opus, *InQuest Gamer for Dummies*.



This deck combines *Incom Corporation*, *Incom Engineers* and maintenance droids to pump up the power, ability and immunity to attrition of your snowspeeders, skyhoppers, and X-wings. Using those vehicles, build complementary Force drains on the ground and in the clouds.

- During the early turns of the game, build up your presence in the War Room

to protect the *Incom Corporation* card that's coming later. It's a great place to start key characters like the *Incom Engineer*, *Tibanna Gas Miner* and *Figrin D'an*.

- Once *Yavin IV* comes into play—either from you or the Dark Side—immediately deploy your cloud sectors, move a couple of T-16s into them and get a *Tibanna Gas Miner* on the table. This combination is the major power behind your Force drains.

- It's important to put a T-16 or two into the lowest cloud sector—the one closest to the sites on *Yavin IV*—because from that location, your T-16 can "react" to any battle or Force drain at an exterior planet site, even if you turn on *Maneuvering Flaps*.

- Han is the key character in this deck, since you gain extra battle destiny draws when pairing him with either *Leia* or *Luke*. Optimally, put Han in a T-16 Skyhopper, then tempt the Dark Side into an exterior site battle with *Leia* or *Luke*. Spring the trap by moving Han and the T-16 into the battle as a "react." Remember to leave one or two cards in your Force pile to pay for the move.

■ John Kaufeld

LOCATIONS

- 2 Yavin 4 System
- 3 Clouds
- 1 Yavin 4: Massassi War Room (Starting location)
- 1 Yavin 4: Docking Bay
- 1 Swamp
- 1 Jungle
- 1 Forest
- 1 Farm

CHARACTERS

- 1 General Dodonna
- 1 Commander Vanden Willard
- 1 Torgyn Farr
- 1 Leia With Blaster Pistol
- 1 Han With Heavy Blaster Pistol
- 1 Luke With Lightsaber
- 1 Romas "Lock" Nevander
- 3 Incom Engineer
- 2 Tibanna Gas Miner
- 1 Figrin D'an
- 1 WED-1016 "Techie" Droid
- 1 WED-9-M1 "Bantha" Droid

VEHICLES AND STARSHIPS

- 4 Snowspeeder
- 4 Incom T-16 Skyhopper
- 1 Luke's T-16 Skyhopper
- 4 X-wing
- 1 Red Leader in Red 1

INTERRUPTS

- 2 Alter
- 2 Control
- 2 Sense
- 3 The Signal
- 1 Leia's Back

EFFECTS

- 2 Incom Corporation
- 1 For Luck
- 2 What're You Tryin' To Push On Us?
- 1 Yarna d' al' Gargan
- 1 Traffic Control
- 1 Wise Advice (Starting Effect)
- 1 Maneuvering Flaps
- 1 Reflection

plugged in

EverQuest by Jeff Hannes

You've tracked your prey to a secluded region of the Toxxulia forest. With grim determination, you launch a bolt of flame at your foe. It turns and races toward you, claws flailing, and so the battle begins. Within moments the tide turns against you. "You have been diseased!" the display reads, mocking you as your health takes a dive. You turn to run, but it's too late. The computer politely informs you that "You have been knocked unconscious!" and you are forced to watch helplessly as your enemy continues to take swats at your mutilated body. Finally, that humbling message appears on screen: "You have been slain by a skunk!" Hey... No one said the life of a fledgling adventurer was easy.

The world of *EverQuest* is brimming with coolness. Monstrous ice giants and cyclopes. Vile necromancers and dread-boned skeletons. And yes, even deadly scent-spraying

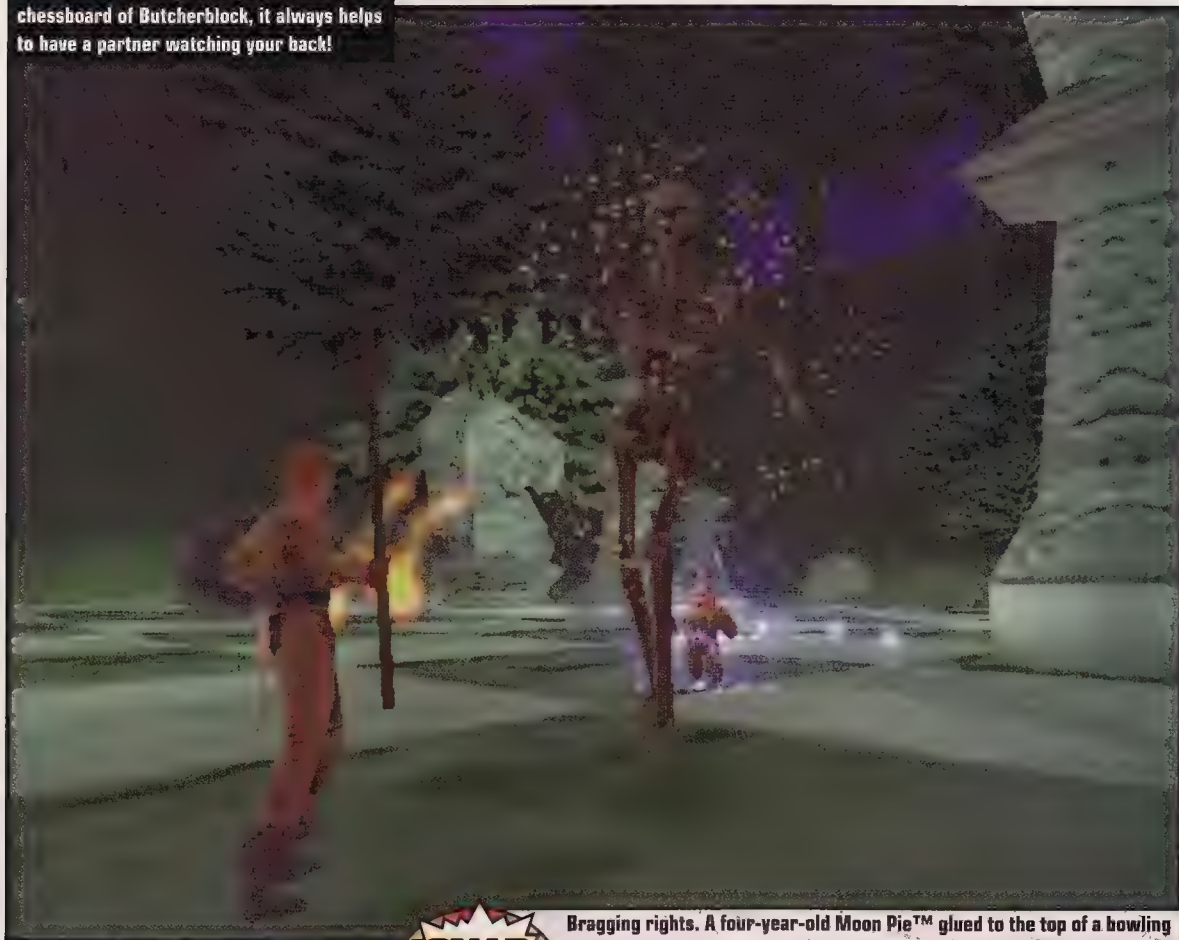
getting to the point where you can safely explore all that *EverQuest* has to offer takes time. Fortunately, we've got plenty of pointers to help get you up and running. First things first though; run the tutorial. As odious as the notion of a tutorial may seem, *EverQuest's* is very well-done and will give you a good feel for the interface. When you've finished slaying wolves and climbing ladders, come back here.

CHARACTER CREATION

When creating your first character, you should avoid jumping right into one of the more difficult choices. For example, a human necromancer might sound fun, but it's highly challenging to play. The guards will kill you on sight, and the guild where you can train and buy new spells is well hidden. Rather than give yourself hours of needless frustration when you first start out, you're better off getting a feel for the game with a less-hated character. You'll be

CHECKMATE In dangerous places like the chessboard of Butcherblock, it always helps to have a partner watching your back!

skunks. Of course,



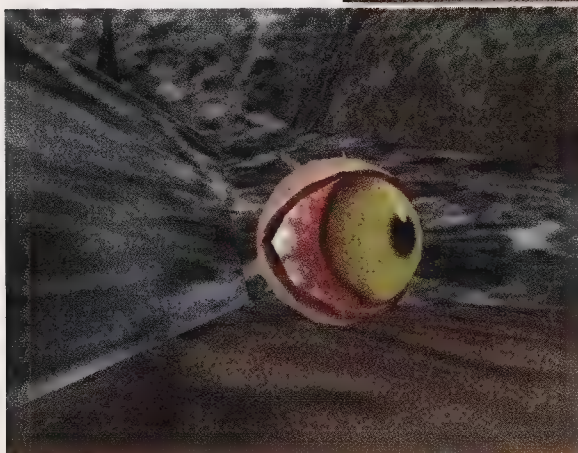
Bragging rights. A four-year-old Moon Pie™ glued to the top of a howling trophy is the most coveted prize among staffers. It goes to whomever won the last big tourney and has changed hands 11 times.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

able to tell if you're character is going to be too tough to play by reading the text that pops up when asked to choose your starting city.

Once you feel comfortable with the controls and have a few kills under your belt—advancing to 2nd level is a good point—start over with your preferred class.

Your next step is choosing attributes. You should always dump a good portion of your freebie points into stamina, since it determines your hit points. If you're a spellcaster, the rest should go into the attribute which determines your mana total; that's wisdom for clerics, druids, rangers, shamans and paladins and



intelligence for enchanters, magicians, necromancers and wizards. Fighter-types will want a few extra points in strength, increasing both max damage and carrying capacity, while rogues should consider putting a few points into agility.

Finally, your choice of deity will affect how certain races and factions view you. For example, worshippers of the Prince of Hate are not very popular in Norrath. Also note that if your character is a human or half-elf, your choice of deity may affect your starting city options. For example, a cleric who chooses to worship the Lifebringer must start in Freeport, while a worshipper of the Rainkeeper starts in Qeynos.

GETTING STARTED

Your first goal should be getting used to the interface and your area of the world—specifically, your starting city. Take the time to complete your first quest by finding your guildmaster. Then comes training. For your first session, pick the skill that corresponds to your starting weapon—right-click and hold your

vital stats

GAME SUMMARY: *EverQuest* is an online-only fantasy roleplaying game.

COMPANY: 989 Studios

RECOMMENDED COMPUTER: 200 MHz or faster;
32 MB RAM; 56k modem and ISP connection

HARD DRIVE SPACE: 330 megabytes

WEB ADDRESS: www.everquest.com

APPROXIMATE COST: \$45 + \$9.89 monthly access fee

weapon to see which skill—and spend all five practices on it. Once you reach 2nd level, what you practice becomes much less important, since most of your training will come from in-the-field experience. Note that some skills, such as channel and meditate, are only available at certain levels. Once you reach the necessary level, you'll need to learn the skill first by spending at least one practice on it.

Now is also a good time to familiarize yourself with the `"/who` command. With it you can get a list of all the players currently in your zone. By adding a class and/or level range, you can get a good feel for what other comparably-skilled adventurers are nearby. For example, `"/who 4 6` will give you all the characters in your zone in that level range. The command `"/who warrior` will list all the warriors. Etc. You can expand your search to the entire server by using `"/who all` followed by your parameters.

The `"/who` command can also be helpful for getting online help. For example, if you're an Erudin Necromancer and you can't find your guildmaster, you might want to recruit the help of a more experienced player. Type `"/who all erudin necromancer` to get a complete list of those online and then `"/tell` one asking for help. Just keep in mind that the other players are there to play, just like you. If someone helps you, be gracious. If they ignore you, don't pester them—it's their prerogative.

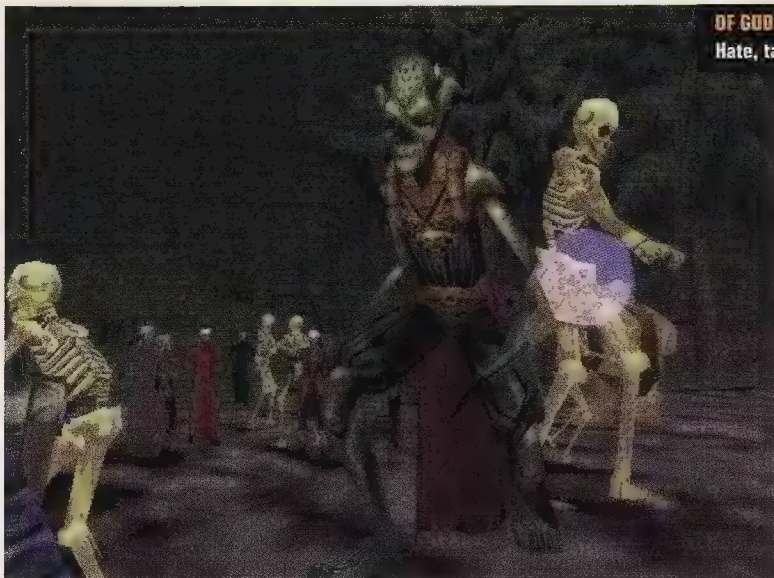
COMBAT BASICS

Once you've got your bearings, head outside of town to do battle. At early levels, resist the urge to do much wilderness exploring. Confine yourself to a small radius where the guards are close at hand. Initiating combat is easy. Not getting killed? That involves a little more. The most pivotal command you need to know for combat is the `"/consider` command, which gives you an idea of how challenging a monster is to your character. Here's the scoop on the results you get back. Note: These apply to one-on-one fights only. Extra allies or foes can change the odds dramatically.

- Green, "Looks like an easy kill." You should have little trouble handling this critter on your own. It's not likely to attack unless you provoke it. However, it will usually run away when at half hit points, and you'll rarely get experience for the kill.

- Blue, "Looks like you would have the upper hand." Barring bad luck, you should be able to handle the fight with little risk. As you get more skilled, you will even be able to handle multiple

OF GODS AND MEN Avatars like Innoruk, the Prince of Hate, take an active role in the world of Norrath.



From levels 2-5, you should focus almost exclusively on "upper hands," sticking to the stuff that's easier to kill. Better to be constantly hunting and picking up experience and treasure than sitting around waiting to heal after a single fight. More significantly, you'll be getting attacked and scoring hits much more often, which means pivotal skills like offense and defense will advance at a faster clip.

Never be afraid to run away, especially if you'll have a difficult time retrieving your corpse. Before you start a fight, you should be aware of where the nearest NPC guards and zone exits are. If you drop to half hit points and your foe is still at two-thirds or better, high-tail it outta there. This is key, since your agility—and hence your ability to

foes at once. Warning: At the lower levels some of the "upper-hands" may end up being too much to handle. If so, avoid them until you gain another level or two.

- Blue, "Looks risky." At higher levels (6+), these challenges will be your bread-and-butter when fighting solo, although you may need to flee from time to time.

- Black, "Looks like an even fight." The monster is the same level as you. Fight wisely and you can win—but it's not a guarantee. This has a large range; some will be dispatched with relative ease, others will push you to the brink.

- Yellow, "Looks like a gamble." Unless you're a spellcaster with a pet, this is more like "looks like death," even up to the early teens.

- Red, "What would you like your tombstone to say?" Attack only if you want to die. If the monster is hostile, keep a safe distance so you don't draw its attention.

At 1st level, everything you are capable of beating will show up as an even fight, and about eight kills will get you to 2nd level.

run away—starts to drop as you get low in hit points. You can either bring the monster to a nearby guard to have him dispatch it or exit through a zone barrier, leaving the bewildered foe in your wake.

GROUPING

Once you hit 5th level, you'll want to start fighting in groups. Not only does it give you the opportunity to interact with other players—up to six can group at a time—it's a much more effective way of battling foes and exploring the world. For example, a single 10th level character would never be able to handle an Orcish Mountaineer on his own, but a group of four 10s would have little trouble.

So how do you get involved in grouping? If you have friends online, great. If not, groups are easy enough to find. Just use the out-of-character command to let the community know you're looking. For example, after logging on you might type, "/ooc 6th level cleric looking for a party, levels 5-7." Alternatively, you might see someone make a similar request. In that case, you can let the

SURVIVAL KIT An EverQuest character's ideal inventory.

Just your run-of-the-mill, hunky barbarian shaman.

If you save some cash, eventually you'll start stockpiling platinum in the bank. That's when you should think about making your first major purchase—a non-rusty, non-splintered weapon. These will run you anywhere from 15 to 30 platinum, but they're well worth it. The best 1H blunt weapon is the morning star, while the halberd rules the 2H slashing category.

Though it doesn't show up on your 3D model, you should always carry some kind of container, preferably a large bag or backpack, to help you tote lots of loot. Don't be in too much of a hurry to buy one though; in most of the starting areas, you can get them off of weenie monsters.



Don't waste your money on cloth armor if your class allows you to wear patchwork. You can buy pieces of patchwork from players for two to three gold per item. A complete set, in order of highest AC bonus to lowest, includes: tunic, pants, cap, sleeves, gloves, boots and gorget.

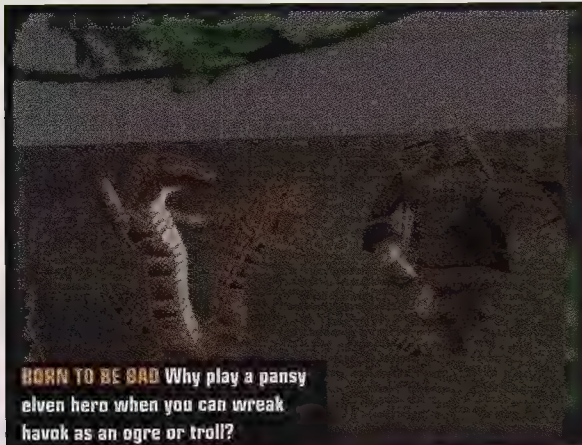
This magical item gives a +5 mana bonus to a variety of spellcasting classes. The bonus isn't a huge deal, but carrying around unique-looking items sets you apart from the crowd. Shields are a nice alternative if you want an AC bonus.

It takes a real man to wear a dress and not get made fun of, and Xanalar is a real man. Of course, it doesn't hurt that he's six-foot-eight and wields a spiked club.



If you read the entire run of InQuests at the average adult reading speed, it would take you four and a half days to read every issue cover to cover.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS



BORN TO BE BAD Why play a pansy elven hero when you can wreak havoc as an ogre or troll?

person know you're interested by using the "/tell" command. Group tactics is an article in and of itself, but here are some general tips to keep in mind:

- After joining a group, set your default speech to "/gsay" so your party members always hear your speech, even when you get separated. This can be done by right-clicking anywhere on the text box.

- Every group should have a leader. Defer to the leader's decisions and you and your party members will work together much better.

- Be aware of your role. If you're a fighter, you're going to be expected to take the brunt of the damage. If you're a healer, you're going to be expected to keep the wounded party members from dying. Etc.

- Make sure everyone in the party is ready before you start a fight, and make sure only one person is tracking prey at a time. Remember that spellcasters need time to regenerate mana in between fights.

- If you start to get low in hit points, back off. Stop attacking, and the monster will eventually target another party member. Take a few rounds off, then jump back into the fray.

- If you're a spellcaster, keep your party members informed about your mana status. If you're getting low on mana in the middle of a fight, let your party know!

SPENDING SPREE

Early on, money is going to be tight, so spend it wisely. Unless you have nothing better to spend it on, don't waste your money on armor at the early levels. The benefits of cloth armor are minimal, and you're much better saving your cash for spells and a better weapon. If you're interested in customizing the look of your character, though, you will want to pick up something for your chest and legs. These also happen to be the pieces of armor that supply the most benefit.

So what should you spend your money on? If you're in a dark area and don't have night vision, a torch or small lantern is helpful. If you plan on fighting with a weapon type different than the one you started with—such as two-handed—get your hands on one as soon as possible, even if it's just rusty or worn. The early levels are critical for training up your skills, and catching up later can be a major pain.

Also, don't hesitate to sell most of the stuff you loot from your victims, including random pieces of armor and spare weapons. The money you get can be kept in the bank, in case you die and lose track of your corpse. Finally, before buying something new, especially armor or spells, check to make sure it is usable by your race and class by right-clicking and holding on the desired item.

HOT SPOTS

EverQuest's home site is www.everquest.com, but the best sites for keeping up on the latest patches and goings-on of the game are eqss.stratics.com and www.eqvault.net. Stratics also has a large array of detailed statistics, charts, strategy guides and maps, while the Vault is home to several good editorials and strategy articles. If you're interested in getting involved in some epic quests, pop over to www.foreverquest.com, home of the largest organization dedicated to player-run quests.

EXPERT TIPS

- **FREE FOOD.** Don't bother spending money on food or drink until you reach 4th level. When you run out of nourishment, attack a guard. Until 4th level, you take no penalties for dying and you will be resurrected with five food and five drink.

- **A VIEW TO A KILL.** When fighting in dangerous outdoor areas, get into the habit of using F9 to switch to a broader view. This will help prevent you from being blind-sided by wandering monsters.

- **JUMPING FOR JOY.** If combat goes sour or you get ambushed, repeatedly hit the spacebar as you're running away; each jump will give you a slight burst of speed. Note that this drops your stamina, limiting your number of jumps.

- **HOME SWEET HOME.**

Whenever you die, you are teleported back to a location near your starting city, making corpse retrieval over long distances difficult. If you want to relocate your character to a new area, see if you can get a high-level (12+) spellcaster to "bind" you to that zone. From then on, whenever you die or gate, you'll be transported to your new home.

- **GOOD LOOKS PAY.** What good is charisma? Characters with high charisma get discounts when buying items. If you're a couple of platinum short for that killer sword, you can have a trusted friend hold your money while you log on with a different character whose charisma is maxed. Then have your good-looker make the purchase and give the item to your friend to hold while you log your main character back on. At higher levels, certain spells will also raise your charisma.



JUMPING FOR JOY

A WORLD OF EXPERIENCE

Got all that starting strategy? Good, but remember, it's just that—starting advice—and it's also just the tip of the iceberg. With over 70 zones on three of the world's five continents to explore and 50 levels to advance, there's a ton to discover on your own. But rest assured, it's well worth it. When you finally fell a giant or score your first magic item, you'll be on your way to an even more thrilling experience. Plus, by then you'll be able to make those skunks pay...

Games Editor Jeff Hannes is glad online games haven't managed to replicate the sense of smell yet. You can find his alter ego Xanalar slaying skunks on the Rathe server.

Turn the page for more tips on the hottest games →

ULTIMA ONLINE

• “Peripheral” skills like anatomy and evaluate intelligence can make you much more effective in combat. Anatomy increases the amount of damage your weapon hits deal, while evaluate intelligence lowers your target’s magic resistance. Best of all, both of these skills function automatically.



• If you want to take on other players, your best weapon is poison. You can take the time to train the skill on your own, or you can hire an assassin player; they usually hang around the banks, advertising their services. When you pay to have a weapon coated with poison, be sure to use arms lore to make sure you get what you paid for.

• Considering creating an alchemist? You’ll need about 5,000 gold, a lot of patience, dedication and mortars. Note that you can use several mortars at once, and you can target a mortar instead of the reagents to make another potion of the same type.

ALPHA CENTAURI

• Drones are part of life in big cities. Get a head start toward keeping them happy by building a children’s creche and recreation commons early on. Secret projects like the human genome project, the longevity vaccine, clinical immortality and The virtual world will also help.

• As your bases develop, several should have a wealth of minerals. Use those bases for military build-up Secret Projects. Install a command center, aerospace complex or bioenhancement center to boost your units’ morale. Add a skunkworks to the base, then use it to quickly prototype new units, saving development time and cost elsewhere.

• If your faction has a positive planet rating, send units patrolling through the fungus or the seas in search of mind worms or Isles of the Deep. Your high planet rating gives you a good chance of capturing the creatures that you find, turning them into instant combat units.



HEROES OF MIGHT & MAGIC III

• Purchase all available troops and creatures during the first few weeks. A large army is important not only for winning battles, but also because small groups of monsters will run or join a sizable force. In recruiting troops, aim for a balance of hand-to-hand and range fighters.

• In developing cities, always opt to upgrade your town halls, as they provide extra gold. Next, keep in mind that it’s more important to build all the basic creature generating structures before upgrading them, since a varied army is more valuable in the early going.

• In order to unlock the final three scenarios in campaign mode, you must complete the first three using the same saved game data. After completing all six, a seventh and final scenario becomes available. Once you determine how to complete a scenario, build up all your heroes before finishing it off. Those heroes will carry over to your next scenario, and the extra experience will come in handy.



BALDUR’S GATE

• Being able to buy items from the thieves’ guild before heading off for the final battle is key to your success in winning the game. If a thief asks you to go to the thieves’ guild and see his boss about a job in Baldur’s Gate, save the game. If you end up having to fight the whole thieves’ guild—a very possible outcome—load up your saved game and refuse to see the guild leader so you’ll be able to buy stuff later on.

• If you’re planning on picking up the *Tales of the Sword Coast* expansion, don’t bother with chapter six of the core game. Stay in Baldur’s Gate so you can explore the new areas added by the expansion—otherwise you’ll have to fight the final battle again after you install the expansion.



Screw words... The average issue of *InQuest Gamer* contains 289 pretty pictures to look at.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

Legendo

by Rei Nakazawa

Phagropods

Most of the city had fled at word of the beasts' coming. But not DuMont. There was pilfering to be done; however, he had not counted on this...

The first burst easily beneath his boot. The second had as well, but by the thirtieth, he was covered in his own blood—and in the thick, foul-smelling bile from their tiny stomachs.

Now he was tired. Too tired to carry his precious loot, too tired to lift his blade one more time... But the phagropods never grew weary; they swarmed the city by the thousands... DuMont was just a quick snack along the way.

PHAGROPODS

Phagropods are called "swarming terrors" by many nomadic tribes, with good reason. About once every 50 years, colonies numbering about three thousand migrate to find new food sources—each one armed with maws full of teeth, each one hungry and each determined to take down anything that stands between them and their goal.

Phagropods are spider-like creatures about the size of a small dog, standing on six long, thin legs bent like a tarantula's. Their bodies are covered with a hard, mustard-colored shell similar to a crab's. Set into their stomachs are three mouths, able to open several inches wide and packed with rows of sharp teeth. Phagropods are generally peaceful creatures, and normally harmless, except during their migration. At this time, hunger consumes them and they move en masse to a new feeding area, devouring everything along the way.

ECOLOGY

The first phagropods were found on remote volcanic islands, possibly evolved from crabs adapting to the heat and lack of easy prey. Events leading to the first mainland appearance are sketchy, but rumor has it that someone took one and sold it to Sarosa's Travelling Circus & Freak Show. Unfortunately, no one knew that phagropods are asexual and can reproduce alone. Within two months, a dozen new phagropods had been born;

CHOMPING AT THE BIT Phagropods will eat their way through anything—walls, armor or adventurers.

Staffers spent approximately 16 man hours—two full work days— assembling these damn *InQuest* trivia facts.



ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

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together, they chewed their way out of their cage and disappeared into the wild, though not before eating most of the circus in the process.

Phagropod colonies live underground, usually near mountains, in complex network of caves that can stretch for miles. Most of a phagropod's time is spent eating soil for the insects and burrowing

animals within. Their jaws are designed to grind down the hardest stone, as their mouths grope blindly for any sources of animal protein. After being fully satiated, the colonies will usually go into a state of hibernation, which has been reported to last for decades.

While not intelligent, phagropods have an unerring sense of direction and highly developed instincts. While burrowing for food, they communicate with the clicking of teeth and pinchers, which can become deafening in great numbers. When their sustenance is close to running out, usually after about 50 years in the same area, "patrols" of about a hundred are sent out to surrounding areas to scout for a new habitat. Once these "scouts" find a suitable location, the entire colony leaves its home and migrates in a straight line to that area. Phagropods never travel above ground alone; one always means the presence of many, many more.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Because of their volcanic origins, phagropods are highly resistant to heat; mages often use ground phagropod shell for fire-resistance spells. While they never attack other beings deliberately, they are so single-minded in their migration that if they meet with any obstacle, living or otherwise, the lead phagropods will latch onto it and chew it down as quickly as possible in order to clear a path for the rest of the colony. If it becomes obvious that they cannot overcome something in this way, they will circumvent it as best they can.

Phagropods are relatively fragile; the average adventurer can squash one underfoot like a bug. Practically anyone who can swing a sword properly can hack one in two with little effort.

Phagropods, being underground creatures, have poor eyesight, though they make up for this with complex sensory organs in their limbs which allow them to accurately feel surrounding vibrations and movement. They can distinguish even creatures of the same species with this incredible sense.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

- A local ranger has determined that a colony of phagropods is about to migrate, and a large city is in the way. However, the area's most important religious festival has just started, and the mayor refuses to cancel it. It's up to the player characters (PCs) to convince the city of the threat.
- An army belonging to one of the PC's homelands stumbles upon a colony of phagropods. The army is overrun and wiped out. Now, the PCs must not only find a way to complete the army's assignment of heading off an incoming invasion force, but also divert the migrating beasts from the nation's capital city.
- A great blacksmith offers to make a much-needed suit of fire-resistant armor for the PCs. One of the components he requires is 20 phagropod shells to dissolve into the metal. Of course, phagropods are never found in quantities of just 20.

Rei Nakazawa is a regular eating machine, which is probably why his last three dates bombed.



SHELLSHOCK

With the mana producing abilities of green and red, you can easily have an army of phagropods to run roughshod over your opponent. Like most weenies, they're destructive in great numbers. Be careful though, cards like Sandstorm can be devastating.

game stats

THE LOBE

ADSD

INT: 4	SIZE: S
AC: 8	MORALE: 17
MOVE: 6r8, 12	SPECIAL DEF: Immune to fire
THACO: 19	MAGIC DEF: Immune to fire
H.D.: 2	
# OF ATTACKS: 1-4 (3 months, plus tail pincher)	

LEGEND OF THE FIVE RINGS

STR: 3	AWARE: 1
WILL: 1	VOID: 2
STAM: 3	PRIMARY ATTACK: Maw 2k3
PER: 2	TO HIT: 3k3
INT: 1	TN: 15
AGIL: 2	INIAT: 2k1
REF: 2	

CALL OF CTHULHU

STR: 1D6+1	AVE. DAM. BONUS: 1D6
CON: 3D6	WEAPON: Tail 20%, 1D6-1
SIZE: 1D6	SKILLS: Hunt by vibration 60%
POW: 1D6+4	ARMOR: 5 point shell
DEX: 2D6+9	SANITY LOSS: 0/1D3
H.P.: 7-8	
MOVE: 15	

[ONDECK]

EverQuest

An absolute wonder of a game—when you can get on a server.

Ultima Online introduced the world of massive online roleplaying to the mainstream; 989 Studio's *EverQuest* sets the standard. Logging on to *EverQuest* is like stepping into a *Dungeons & Dragons* campaign, and then finding your friends right around the corner. In creating an immersive experience—the most important aspect of the game—the developers accomplished their task with near perfection.

The Good

Right from the start, *EverQuest* will wow you with its diversity. There are 12 races and 14 classes, and each offers a distinct experience. You can play the game for months as one character, and then have a completely different experience starting over with a new class and race. For the most part, the classes are well-balanced, and the diversity encourages players to develop specific roles, as opposed to *Ultima*, where just about everyone ends up being a fighter/mage. Also, the level-based system of advancement gives you a good feeling of accomplishment, especially when you hit those critical levels that grant you new skills and spells.

The graphics, while not at the *Quake III* level, are amazing nonetheless. From the deserts of Northern Ro to the iceland wastes of Everfrost, the huge fantasy world of Norrath is beautifully rendered. The excellent graphics and animation carry over to *EQ*'s brilliant spell system. There are over 700 spells, many of which have unique visual effects. A non-restrictive casting system—i.e., no reagents—is less hazardous and more fun than *Ultima*'s version.

Speaking of other players, this is where *EQ* really shines. Play is very much geared toward a social environment, as grouping with other adventurers is key to developing your character and being able to explore the landscape. And with player-killing practically a non-entity, you're sure to make friends—both virtual and real. Of course, if you prefer an environment that allows player-killing there is a server dedicated to like-minded individuals.

The Bad

Unfortunately, all is not roses. Through the first few weeks, there have been terrible server problems. At times, the game has been unplayable, either because of an inability to log on or because packet loss is soaring. 989 Studios is taking steps to fix these problems, but the initial overcrowding left a bitter taste in many people's mouths. The problems may be a thing of the past by the time you read

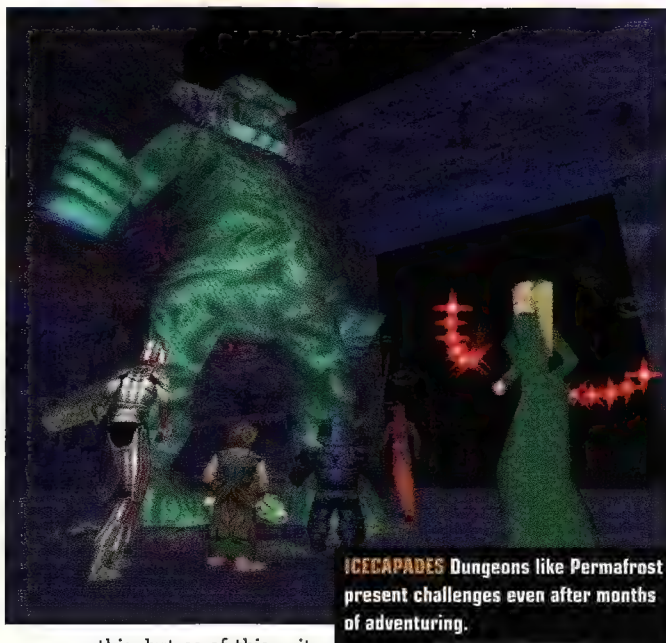
PUBLISHER: 989 Studios

CATEGORY: Fantasy computer game

RELEASE: March 1999

REQUIREMENTS: 200 MHz, 330 meg hard drive, internet account, 3D support

SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$44.95, plus \$9.89 per month



ICECAPADES Dungeons like Permafrost present challenges even after months of adventuring.

this, but as of this writing—more than two weeks into the release—they're all too present.

Performance aside, when the game is running smoothly, there are still several aspects that could be better. Customizing the look of your character is limited, making it difficult to visually stamp your individuality. The interface is clunky at times, and button-placement is far from intuitive. The NPCs are more active than those in *Ultima*, but their AI is extremely limited, and conversation with them is practically non-existent. And at early levels, the quests aren't balanced with monster-bashing; the minimal rewards are rarely worth your time. Of course, these are minor nits in the overall scheme.

The Deal

The server problems make it hard to accurately grade this amazing game. *EverQuest* is like a drug, and when the servers are down, we can't get our fix. But each time the servers come back up, we're right there. And when the game is flowing in our veins again, all past performance gripes are forgotten—at least until the next period of withdrawal. ■ M.R. Goode

THE VERDICT A-

The first mention of Cow Nose in "Swan Song" wasn't until issue #27 when her mouse waffles were a topic of conversation. First Cow Nose appearance in "Inquisition": issue #17. First Kitty Letter: #29. First Cow Nose Magic card: #36.



Unknown Armies

John Woo does *Call of Cthulhu*.

In Atlas' new roleplaying game *Unknown Armies*, the end of the world is coming. On the street, twisted monsters and black-ops gunmen compete to see who gets the real Power, while Big Bad Muthas pull the strings of multiple conspiracies to see who gets to be on the Cosmic Board of Directors at the end of time. Where do you fit in? That's for you to decide.

The Good and the Bad

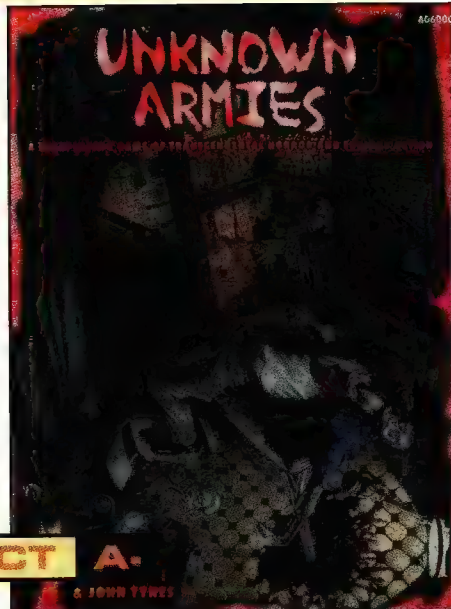
This game has massive style points, succeeding in tapping the best of both the modern horror genre and dark action movies. Imagine a world—part "Replacement Killers" and part "Millennium"—in which Chow Yun-Fat and Max von Sydow are equally at home. The rules are clean, slick and downright clever; there's a cool mechanic for handling percentile dice where you try to get as high to your mark as possible without going over.

The game's big drawback is that it's so stylish it hurts. The concepts ride dangerously close to incomprehensible at some points, making it hard for prospective GMs to truly absorb the world they are meant to portray. There's an intense darkness that borders on unbearable.

The Deal

Some of the most clever game design since *L5R* props up a mature game that is sure to appeal to anyone looking for that "next cool thing." Both *Vampire* and *Call of Cthulhu* players looking to expand will love *Unknown Armies*, but be prepared to work at this one a bit. ■ Sean Patrick Fannon

PUBLISHER: Atlas Games
CATEGORY: Conspiracy RPG rulebook
RELEASE: March 1999
FORMAT: 224-page softcover
SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$25.00



Unknown Armies is TM & © Atlas Games

The Balrog

Cool Balrog, so-so expansion.

Better late than never. After a year of delays, *The Balrog* expansion for the *Middle-earth* CCG is finally out. In this 104-card set, you take the reins of Durin's bane himself, wreaking havoc in a host of new Under-deep locales. The complete set can be had for under \$40, but do you get a Balrog-sized bang for your buck? Not quite.

The Good and the Bad

The best part of *The Balrog* is the packaging. Pick up the two fixed starters and you've got a complete set and a pair of playable decks. Two-thirds of the new cards can only be used in or against Balrog decks, but Wizards and Ringwraith players get some nice staples, including some fierce spider-related hazards and a permanent-event that really kicks ring decks into gear.

Unfortunately, *The Balrog* doesn't offer much excitement or innovation. It focuses heavily on the Under-deeps, a mechanic introduced four expansions ago, and the limited new rules are convoluted and card-specific. Whereas *The White Hand's* rules for fallen-wizards slid seamlessly into the structure of *Middle-earth*, *The Balrog* smashes its way in, leaving a mess in its wake. Plus; you can't play the two fixed decks against one another.

The Deal

Even with almost half of the cards comprised of common and uncommon reprints, \$40 for 137 new cards with limited duplication is a good deal. If you're an avid *Middle-earth* player, you might as well plop down the cash. Of course, if you don't pick up *The Balrog*, you won't be missing much either.

■ Luke Durok

PUBLISHER: Iron Crown Enterprises
CATEGORY: Fantasy CCG expansion
RELEASE: February 1999
FORMAT: Two fixed 132-card decks
SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$18.95 per deck



THE VERDICT C

The Balrog is TM & © Tolkien Enterprises, I.C.E. authorized user

Heroes of Might and Magic III

Lush play environment and lots of variety.

The land of Erathia was long a place of beauty and stability, until traitors murdered their king and brought him back to life as an undead warlord to help them conquer the land. In *Heroes of Might & Magic III*, you control a gathering of heroes dedicated to restoring Erathia to its past glory and freeing the once great king from his grisly unlife.

The Good and the Bad

Heroes of Might & Magic III, the continuation of the mega-popular series, has a lot going for it. First, the graphics and character animation have improved considerably since the last installment. In addition, tons of new character classes, monsters and town types expand the strategy aspect of gameplay. Recruiting heroes is a snap, and there's a host of classes and characters to choose from, each with a unique specialty or ability. The game also boasts several modes, including single player scenarios, campaigns, multiplayer and even a map editor.

Unfortunately, battle scenes can become somewhat predictable, and the scenarios all have a familiar feel. The battle system is a little clunky; most often superior numbers win, but it's sometimes difficult to gauge character strength so that your army is well-balanced.

The Deal

Might & Magic III achieves a delicate balance, one that offers depth and engrossing gameplay without being overly complicated. Add in the blend of strategy and roleplaying that have made the series such a success, and this is one of the first must-have games of 1999.

■ Dan DiGiacomo

PUBLISHER: Sierra
CATEGORY: Fantasy strategy computer game
RELEASE: March 1999
SYSTEM: 133 MHz, 200 megs HD
SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$49.99



THE VERDICT A-

Guide to the Sabbat

Taps a vein of possibility.

The Sabbat revels in its monstrous power, seeking to turn cities into abattoirs running rich with foaming human blood. They pervert all that is holy into an uncanny hive torn between bestial madness and inhuman depravity. White Wolf's *Guide to the Sabbat* complements its sister *Guide to the Camarilla*, also just released.

The Good and the Bad

Behind its superb cover and serviceable art, the *Guide to the Sabbat* taps a real vein of possibility. Most storytellers think inside the Camarilla box and leave the Sabbat to be stereotyped as empty villains. Not so. This book explains the ideologies and nasty practices of the Sabbat as it does its bloodlines, antitribu, rite and disciplines—and presents it all with dark dazzle and meaty depth.

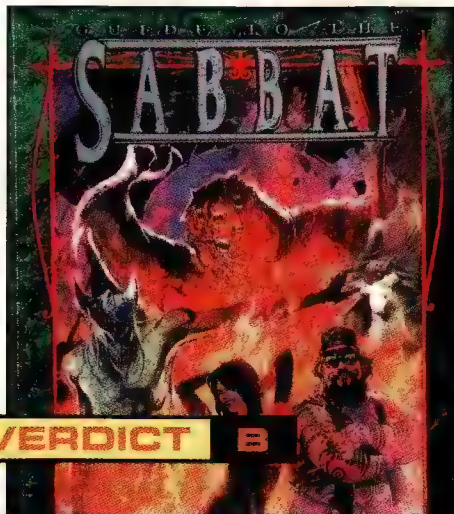
The chronicle and storyteller guidelines flare less brightly; some sections are pretty clunky. The editing is spotty in places, and the index is as foul a blasphemy as any the Sabbat ever practices.

The Deal

This book gives vital dimension to the Sabbat and to any *Vampire* chronicle. Storytellers who plan to use the Sabbat as antiheroes or supervillains will get more than their money's worth.

■ Kenneth Hite

PUBLISHER: White Wolf
CATEGORY: Horror RPG sourcebook
RELEASE: February 1999
FORMAT: 224 page hardcover
SUGGESTED RETAIL: \$25.95



THE VERDICT B



The number of CCGs advertised in issue #1 was six. Of those six, three of them are still around: *Magic*, *Rage and Redemption*. The three dead ones are *Battlemasters*, *Doomtrooper* and *Shadowfist*.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS



JULY 16-18, 1999

**ROSEMONT
CONVENTION CENTER**

INQUEST SPECIAL GUEST

**RICHARD
GARFIELD**



**CREATOR OF
MAGIC: THE GATHERING**

© 1998 WIZARD ENTERTAINMENT. MAGIC, THE GATHERING © WIZARDS OF THE COAST. PHOTO BY PAUL SCHWAB. GUEST LIST SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

**1999 GUEST OF HONOR
KEVIN SMITH**



MORE SPECIAL GUESTS TO BE ANNOUNCED NEXT MONTH!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WIZARD WORLD CHICAGO VISIT US ONLINE AT
www.wizardworld.com**



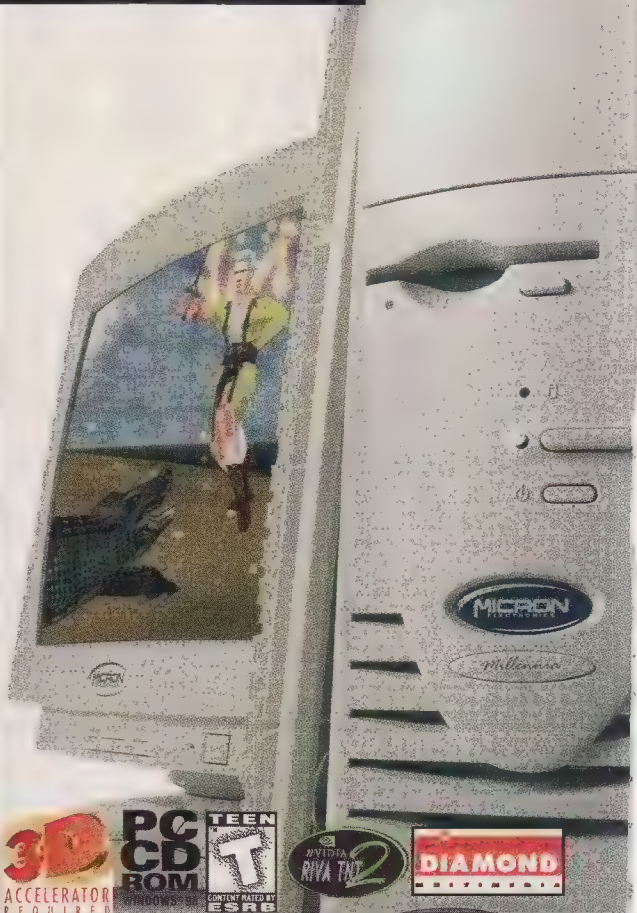
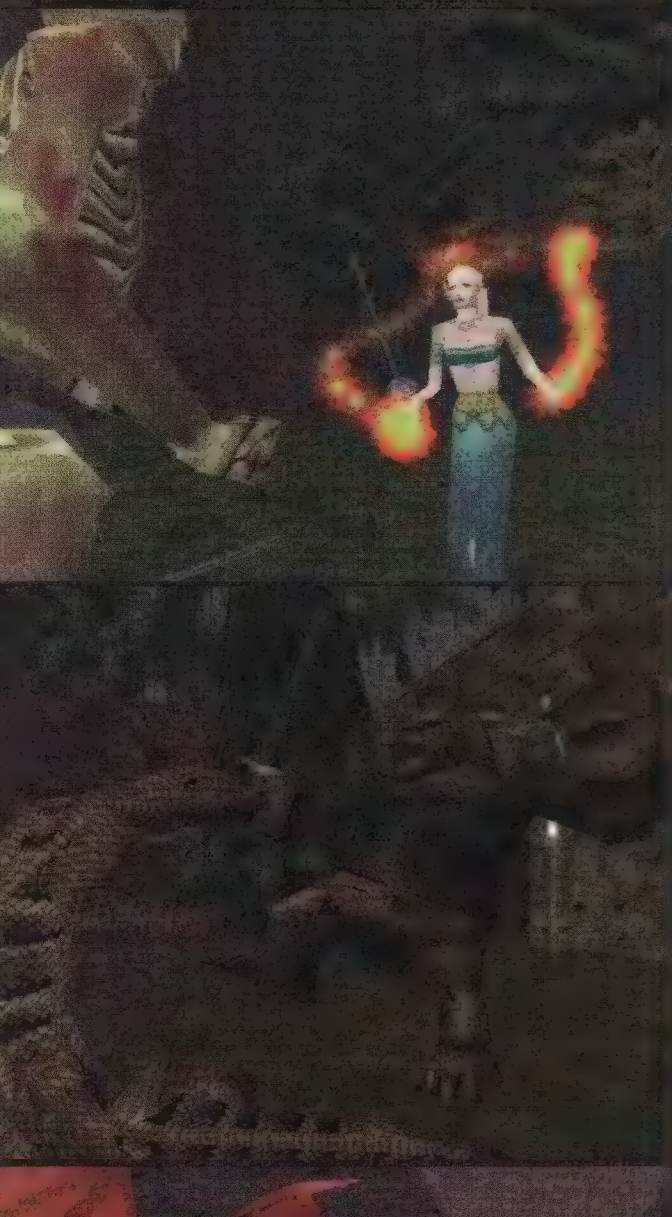
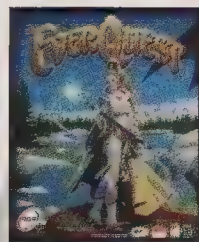
THE

EverQuest

CONTEST

COMPUTER SPECS

Millennia 500 MAX; Intel Pentium processor 500Mhz; 512KB internal L2 cache; 128MB RAM; 15GB hard drive; 17" monitor (15.8" viewable area) 6x DVD-Rom drive; 32MB Diamond Viper 770 nVidia TNT2 graphics card and everything else you need to play EverQuest™!



INTERNET CONNECTION REQUIRED.



HOW TO WIN

Mount thy trusty steed, for it is time to go on a quest—a quest for *InQuest Gamer*, that is. Sucked into cyberspace by some bizarre accident, *IQ Gamer* mascot Cow Nose the Cat is trapped in Norrath, the mythical land of *EverQuest™*. We want you, Knight of the Online Table, to find these 50 pounds of lost feline. Add the five clues together and they will lead you to Cow Nose's location.

CLUES:

1. How many races are there to choose from in *EverQuest™*?
2. How many different classes are there?
3. What is the highest level a character can reach?
4. What is the maximum number of players that can join in a single group?
5. How many continents are on Norrath?



THIS CONTEST IS SPONSORED BY 989 STUDIOS.

EVERLEGAL NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

Contest is open to anyone except employees of Wizard Entertainment Group, 989 Studios, and their immediate families. To enter, send a postcard (no envelopes please) with your name, age, address, and phone number to: "The EverQuest Contest, c/o InQuest Gamer, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. No mechanical reproductions of completed forms are accepted, but you can photocopy the entry form before filling it out if you don't want to mess up your magazine. All entries and all rights relating thereto become the property of Wizard Entertainment Group and none will be returned. All taxes—federal, state and local, and any additional expenses if any—will be the responsibility of the prize winners. Prizes are awarded in the names of the contest winners and are not transferable. Offer void where prohibited, regulated or restricted by law in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and rules hereof. All entries must be received at contest headquarters by June 30, 1999. Wizard Entertainment Group is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected or mutilated entries. Winners will be randomly selected from among all properly completed entries by Wizard Entertainment Group. Odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received prior to the closing date of the contest. Winners will be notified approximately one month after the contest deadline. Prize Winners (or parent/legal guardian of minor winner) may be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility/release within 14 days of notification attempt. Failure to return the affidavit in the time noted will result in disqualification of the entry and an alternate winner will be selected. If an entrant, having been declared as a winner, does not accept the prize or the prize or prize notification is undeliverable, another entry will be selected. In the event that a prize is not available or it becomes impossible for the sponsor to award the prize which has been designated, the sponsor retains the right to substitute a prize or product of equal value to the winner. Determination of whether a prize or product is of equal value is in the sole discretion of the sponsor. Winning entries will be selected on or about July 24, 1999.

Grand Prize: Millennium 500 MAX; Intel Pentium processor 500MHz; 512KB internal L2 cache, 128MB RAM - 15GB hard drive; 17" monitor (15.8" viewable area) 6x DVD-Rom drive; 32MB Diamond Viper 770 nVidia TNT2 graphics card. Approximate retail value, \$3,000. Runner up Prize: a copy of *EverQuest™*. Approximate retail value \$39.95.

For a list of winners, available after July 24, 1999, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: "The EverQuest™ Contest Winners List, c/o Wizard Entertainment Group, P.O. Box 118, Congers, NY 10920-0118. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Sweepstakes is void where prohibited or restricted by law and is subject to all local, state and federal laws and regulations.

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GRAND PRIZE:

1 One lucky Questor will win a copy of *EverQuest™* and this mondo computer system! If that ain't enough, go buy it yourself, ya ingrate!

RUNNERS UP:

5 Five lucky first prize winners will each win a copy of *EverQuest™*, the hottest online game since online was invented!

Fill out the entry form, put everything in an envelope and send to:

EVERQUEST™ CONTEST,
c/o *InQuest Gamer*, P.O. Box 118,
Congers, NY 10920-0118

CONTEST DEADLINE
JUNE 30, 1999

THE "EVERQUEST™" CONTEST

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER (WITH AREA CODE) _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS (IF YA GOTTS ONE) _____

WHAT EVERQUEST LOCATION IS COW NOSE AT? _____

CardSTOCK

Hooked on Classic by Rick Lipman

Is the apocalypse upon us? Perhaps. The Standard tourney scene has been turned upside-down again with the release of *6th Edition*, or, as Wizards of the Coast insists on calling it to further confuse us, *Classic Edition*. The addition of many new cards is almost as significant as what has been removed from the Type II Standard environment. People may play Extended and Type I from time to time but Type II continues to be the most played constructed format. The banning of Memory Jar (\$4.50) is also in the news as Wizards continues to try to wreck combo decks, especially with regionals and nationals coming up very soon. Hmm... People might actually start to play with creatures again.

Back in Style

When a new set comes out the prices of some cards tend to bounce around like a yo-yo. Hammer of Bogardan (\$10) and Balduvian Horde (\$10) were very hot cards when they first came out, quickly trading in the \$15 and \$20 range. When they went out of Standard the Hammer and the Horde faded in value a bit. Now that they are back in Type II the Hammer will again be a much sought after card and the Balduvian Horde may sneak into some red decks. On the other side of the coin, there are the cards which leave the environment. Necropotence (\$9) is leaving



VOLCANIC ERUPTION Several fiery favorites make their return in *Magic's 6th Edition*.

Type II and should start to slump in price slightly. Necro is still a great card and will see some play in Extended, but unless it comes back in 7th it will soon be mostly unplayed and forgotten. Other cards on the chopping block include the popular Ball Lightning (\$12), Sylvan Library (\$5.50) and Colossus of Sardia (\$5).

The death of Combo-mania with all of the recent bannings may see some of the older more popular Type II cards go up in value. Armageddon decks may be more popular again since the old favorite is still around. Vampiric Tutor (\$10) was a standard in many decks when the environment was slower and could see a lot of use, perhaps in the popular Hatred (\$10) decks. I'm sure we will also see some new cards rise out of the depths to become a force just like *Fallen Empires'* High Tide did in Extended.

A Legacy of Disappointment

Urza's Legacy is getting to be difficult to find a lot sooner than most *Magic* expansions. The presence of foil cards has caused a lot more product to be opened than usual and some dealers report *Legacy* boxes as not being easy to find. With *Urza's Destiny* coming out in early June the demand may ease up, but it is possible that *Legacy* will always be a difficult find. Buying a box and putting it away for a rainy day might be a wise move, since it has the same potential for value that *Alliances* did. The flip side is that dealers may over-order *Urza's Destiny* to compensate for the demand, and this could result in another *Fallen Empires*, where boxes sit on the shelves for months.

Meanwhile, popular *Legacy* cards such as Defense Grid (\$7), Defense of the Heart (\$4), Might of Oaks (\$5.50), Multani (\$8), Second Chance (\$7) and of course Palinchron (\$8) are seeing some action, though their values have been diminished by the huge number of boxes that dealers have cracked open in search of foils. The opening of all those *Legacy* boxes has also caused a drop off in the value of foil sets. Once trading in the \$2,500 range they have now settled back into the slightly more sane range of \$1,500-\$2,000.

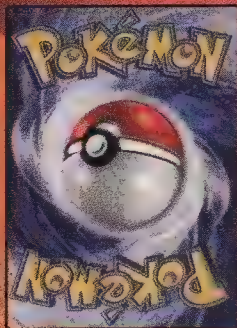
WHAT'S HOT

TOP 10 CCGs

1. *Magic: The Gathering*
2. *Pokemon*
3. *Star Wars CCG*
4. *Star Trek CCG*
5. *Legend of the Five Rings*
6. *Doomtown*
7. *Babylon 5*
8. *Highlander*
9. *Legend of the Burning Sands*
10. *Xena*

BIGGEST MOVER

POKEMON



in other NEWS...

JUNGLE BOOGIE

The first *Pokémon* expansion is being readied by Wizards of the Coast, who is still trying to keep up with the demand for this red hot game. Later this summer *Jungle* should be released. Since it's going to be very similar to the Japanese version, we can tip you in on a few spoilers. The set is a 48-card set featuring 16 rares (all foil), 16 uncommons and 16 commons. It contains 45 new pokémon, 2 repeats (Pikachu and Electrode with new powers) and 1 trainer.

If you're wondering what effect the expansion will have on prices for the basic set, the answer is not much. Most of the new stage 1 and stage 2 pokémon in *Jungle* are evolved from common and uncommon basic set pokémon. However, grass decks get a significant boost, so interest in the foils Nidoking (\$10) and Venusaur (\$13) may pick up.

Meanwhile, the short print run of *Pokémon* 1st edition has pushed complete sets into the \$250 range and climbing. 1st Edition cards tend to sell for about 30% more than their "unlimited" brethren and 1st Edition packs sell easily in the \$5 range. 1st Edition Boxes are selling well at around \$350. In the short term prices will only continue to rise. Once Wizards prints enough cards for everyone to have some the prices of current foil rares will go back down into the \$5-\$8 range. Right now they are trading in the \$8-\$12 area if you can find them. Power rares like Alakazam (\$12), Charizard (\$28), Mewtwo (\$10.50) and Raichu (\$12) have been very popular.

PHANTOM SALES

You've probably heard by now that there's a new movie coming out later this month. Some "Phantom Menace" or something. Suffice it to say, "Star Wars" buzz is tremendous these days, but all the excitement has done little for the sale of Decipher's *Star Wars CCG* cards. However, interest should pick up significantly when the new cards are released. Expect *Endor* packs to fly off the shelves—even though it's based on the old movies, any new "Star Wars" product is going to be sought after. You can also expect a high-level of interest in the *Young Jedi* game, a starter-level product based on "The Phantom Menace." Veteran *Star Wars* players will want a taste of what the new game is going to be like.

Rick Lipman once owned four sets of Beta and a dozen Black Loti. In an attempt to buy a life he eventually sold them and bought a car. Now, with boxes of Pokémon flooding his apartment, he no longer has a life.

1 GAEA'S CRADLE

Green decks are back. With the GDCI putting the clamp on combo decks, the once-maligned green creature decks are all the rage these days. In fact, they're so popular that Gaea's Cradle has vaulted to the top of the list of hottest cards. It is joined on the list by the resurging Birds of Paradise and perennial favorite Survival of the Fittest. Elsewhere, Cursed Scroll and Living Death continue to hover near the top of the list. Of particular note should be the fact that *Urza's Legacy*, the most recent expansion, is woefully under-represented this month, with only Ring of Gix and Defense Grid on the list. We can thank the foil card boom for saturating the market with *Legacy* singles and hence diminishing the value of the non-foil rares.



Table listing various cards with their types and prices. Includes cards like Abra, Alekzander (holographic), Arcanine, Beedrill, Bill, Blaznia (holographic), Bulbasaur, Caterpie, Chansey (holographic), Charizard (holographic), Charmander, Charmeleon, Clefairy (holographic), Clefairy Doll, Computer Search, Defender, Devolution Spray, Dewgong, Diglett, Doduo, Double Colorless Energy, Dragonair, Dratini, Drowzee, Dugtrio, Electabuzz, Electrode, Energy Removal, Energy Retrieval, Farfetch'd, Fighting Energy, Fire Energy, Full Heal, Gastly, Grass Energy, Growlithe, Gust of Wind, Gyarados, Haunter, Hitmonlee (holographic), Inopostor Professor Oak, Item Finder, Ivysaur, Jynx, Kadabra, Kakuna, Koffing, Less, Lightning Energy, Machop (holographic), Machoke, Machop, Machop, Magikarp, Magnemite, Magnemite (holographic), Maintenance, Metapod, Mewtwo (holographic), Nidoking (holographic), Nidorino, Ninetales (holographic), Niridale, Onix, Pidgeotto, Pidgey, Pikachu, PlusPower, Pokédex, Pokémon Breeder, Pokémon Center, Pokémon Flute, Pokémon Trader, Poliwhar, Poliwhir, Poliwhar (holographic), Ponyta, Porygon, Potion, Professor Oak, Psychic Energy, Raichu (holographic), Raticate, Rattata, Revive, Sandshrew, Scoop Up, Seel.



STAR TREK CUSTOMIZABLE CARD GAME: UNLIMITED DECEMBER-1994

List of items and prices for Star Trek Customizable Card Game: Unlimited. Includes Full Set (363 cards), Starter Deck (60 cards), Starter Box (12 decks), Booster Pack (15 cards), and Booster Box (36 packs).

Table listing various cards with their types and prices. Includes cards like Albert Einstein, Ailder Jarak, Alien Groupie, Alyama Nechayev, Ancient Computer, Anti-Time Anomaly, Arms-Skin of Evil, Avert Disaster, B'Etor, Barclay's Protoplasmic Disease, Betazoid Gift Box, Beverly Crusher, Borg Ship, Byrnas Weapon Enhancement, Cross, Crystalline Entity, Cultural Observation, Cytherians, Data, Deanna Troi, Devil, The, Devaras, Dr. La Forge, Dr. Leah Brahms, Duras, Evaluate Terraforming, Explore Black Cluster, Explore Dyson Sphere, Explore Typhoon Expanse, Extraction, Geordi La Forge, Goddess of Empathy, Gowron, Haakona, Honor Challenge, Horgathn, Hugh, Hunt for DNA Program, I.K.C. Bortas, I.K.C. Burak, I.K.C. Hegh'ta, I.K.C. Pagi, I.K.C. Qu'vat, Iconia Investigation, Interphase Generator.

Table listing various cards with their types and prices. Includes cards like Investigate Alien Probe, Investigate Disappearance, Investigate Disturbance, Investigate Massacre, Investigate Raid, Investigate Rogue Comet.

Table listing various cards with their types and prices. Includes cards like Sarek, Sarjenka, Sarthong Plunderer, Satelek, Seek Life-form, Sela.



DOUBLE TAKES

DOWN THE DRAIN. In the early days the most valuable premium Magic card was Sewers Of Estark, priced at \$7.50. Today the Sewers are worth even less, valued at only \$5, and the most valuable premium is the \$78 foil Ring Of Gix.

Table listing various cards with their types and prices. Includes cards like Investigate "Shattered Space", Investigate Sighting, Investigate Time Continuum, Jaglon Shrek-Info Broker, Jean-Luc Picard, Kevin Uckridge, Kahless, Kargan, K'Ehleyr, Kieran Game, Khazara, Khitomer Research, Kivas Fajo-Collector, Klingon Death Yell, Klingon Game, Kurak, Kurian Naikos, Kum, Leah Brahms, Lore Returns, Lore's Fingemail, Lursa, Lwaxanna Troi, Medical Relief, Mendak, Morgan Bateson, Nagulum, Neela Daren, New Contact, Pegasus Search, Pi, Q, Reginald Barclay, Richard Galen, Ro Laren, Roga Danar, Shelby, Sir Isaac Newton, Study "Hole in Space", Study Lonika Pulsar, Study Nebula, Supernova, Survey Mission, Tam Elbrun, Tasha Yar, Temporal Causality Loop, Thomas Riker, Thought Maker, Time Travel Pad, Tomalak, Toreth, Tox Uhtat, Tsinikovsky Infection, U.S.S. Brittan, U.S.S. Enterprise, U.S.S. Hood, U.S.S. Phoenix, U.S.S. Yamatu, Varon-T Disruption, Vash, Vulcan Stone of Gol, Warp Core Breach, Wesley Crusher, William T. Riker, Wind Dancer, Wolf, Wormhole Negotiations.

Booster Box (36 packs) 175.00. Cards are black-bordered. Single cards are worth 30% to 40% more than unlimited equivalents.

ALTERNATE UNIVERSE EXPANSION DECEMBER-1995

List of items and prices for Alternate Universe Expansion: Decipher-1995. Includes Full Set (122 cards), "Future Enterprise", Booster Pack (15 cards), Booster Box (36 packs), Commons, Common Personnel, Uncommons, and Unlisted Rares.

Q CONTINUUM EXPANSION DECEMBER-1996

List of items and prices for Q Continuum Expansion: Decipher-1996. Includes Full Set (121 cards), Booster Pack (15 cards), Booster Box (36 packs), Commons, Uncommons, and Unlisted Rares.

Table listing various cards with their types and prices. Includes cards like Arbiter of Succession, Blade of Tken, Cakar, Data's Body, Galen, I.K.C. Malt-R'a, Juliana Tainer, Katherine Pulaski, Klingon Civil War, Lal, Madam Guinan, Mannheim's Dimensional Door, Mona Lisa, Mortal Q, Mr. Horn, Nick Locarno, Shelik, The, Terix, USS Stargazer, Yuta.

FIRST CONTACT EXPANSION DECEMBER-1997

List of items and prices for First Contact Expansion: Decipher-1997. Includes Full Set (130 cards), Booster Pack (9 cards), Booster Box (30 packs), Commons, and Uncommons.

STAR TREK CUSTOMIZABLE CARD GAME: LIMITED DECEMBER-1995

List of items and prices for Star Trek Customizable Card Game: Limited: Decipher-1995. Includes Full Set (363 cards), Starter Deck (60 cards), Starter Box (12 decks), and Booster Pack (15 cards).

STAR TREK DATA C=COMMON U=UNCOMMON R=RARE

Legend for Star Trek Data symbols: BAJOR., BORG, CARD., FEDER., KLING., NON-A., OTHER, ROMUL. and symbols for ART Artifact, DIL Dilemma, DOR Doorway, EQU Equipment, EVE Event, HQ Headquarters, INT Interrupt, LOC Location, MIS Mission, OBJ Objective, OUT Outpost, PER Personnel, SIT Site, STA Starship, STI Station.

PRICE DATA WENT UP WENT DOWN HEAVY TRADING NEW SET

INQUEST **gamer** Price Guide

- Borg Kiss INT R 4.00
- Borg Neuroprocessor INT R 3.50
- Borg Queen PER R 13.00
- Build Interlocking Beacon OBJ R 3.50
- Data PER R 11.00
- Deanna Trol PER R 8.00
- Espionage Mission MIS R 3.50
- Geordi La Forge PER R 10.00
- Jean-Luc Picard PER R 15.00
- Lily Slane PER R 4.00
- Magic Carpet Ride OCD ART R 4.50
- Montana Missile Complex LOC R 4.50
- My First Raygun DIL R 4.00
- Ocular Implants EVE R 3.50
- Oby Douby DIL R 3.00
- Paul Parter PER R 4.00
- Phoenix STA R 5.00
- Primitive Culture DIL R 3.00
- Queen's Borg Cube STA R 8.00
- Queen's Borg Sphere STA R 8.00
- Regenerate EVE R 4.00
- Reginald Barclay PER R 5.00
- Retask EVE R 4.00
- Salvage Starship OBJ R 3.50
- Scout Encounter DIL R 4.50
- Shipwreck INT R 4.00
- Solkar PER R 4.00
- Stop First Contact OBJ R 4.00
- Strict Dress Code DIL R 4.00
- Temporal Wake INT R 4.00
- Theta-Radiation Poisoning DIL R 4.00
- Three-Dimensional Thinking INT R 4.00
- USS Enterprise-E STA R 18.00
- Undetected Beam-In DIL R 4.00
- Visit Cochrane Memorial OBJ R 3.50
- Wall of Ships EVE R 4.00
- Weak Spot INT R 3.50
- William T. Riker PER R 12.50
- Wolf PER R 10.00
- Zefram Cochrane PER R 7.00
- Zefram Cochrane's Telescope ART R 3.75

- Pr rarity denotes promo.
- Admin Murriza PER R 4.50
 - Access Relay Station MIS R 3.50
 - Aid Fugitives MIS R 3.00
 - Airlack DOR R 4.50
 - Aldara STA R 4.50
 - Alien Gambling Device ART R 4.00
 - Altomian Brain Teaser DIL U 1.00
 - Altovar PER R 5.00
 - Automated Security System EVE R 3.50
 - Bajoran Civil War EVE R 3.50
 - Bareil Antos PER R 3.50
 - Baseball INT R 4.50
 - Benjamin Sisko PER R 20.00
 - Bo'raK PER R 4.50
 - Boheeka PER R 4.50
 - Borad PER R 4.50
 - Camping Trip MIS R 3.00
 - Central Command HQU R 5.00
 - Cha'Joh STA R 4.50
 - Chamber of Ministers HQU R 5.00
 - Changing Research MIS R 2.50
 - Colonel Day PER R 4.50
 - Cure Blight MIS R 3.00
 - Danar PER R 4.00
 - Deep Space Nine/Terak Nur STT R 18.00
 - Defiant Dedication Plaque EVE R 4.00
 - D'Ghor PER R 4.50
 - DNA Clues DIL R 3.00
 - Dukat PER R 12.50
 - Duranja EVE R 5.00
 - Elim Garak PER R 7.00
 - Enabran Tain PER R 6.00
 - Entek PER R 4.50
 - Establish Tractor Lock OBJ R 3.50
 - Garak Has Some Issues DIL R 3.50
 - Garak's Tailor Shop SIT R 3.50
 - General Krim PER R 4.50
 - Gilora Rejal PER R 4.50
 - Going To The Top INT R 4.00
 - Grilka PER R 4.50
 - Groumall STA R 4.50
 - Harvester Virus DIL R 3.50
 - HQ: Return Orb to Bajor OBJ R 3.00
 - I.K.C. Tah'Kah't STA R 5.50
 - Investigator Rumors MIS R 3.50
 - Jadzia Dax PER R 15.00
 - Jake and Nog PER R 8.50
 - Jaro Essa PER R 4.50
 - Julian Bashir PER R 15.00
 - Kai Opaka PER R 7.00
 - Karina PER R 4.50
 - Kiria Nerys PER R 13.00
 - Korinas PER R 4.50
 - Kwat PER R 4.50
 - Lanaris Holm PER R 4.50
 - Li Nalas PER R 4.50
 - Makbar PER R 5.00
 - Martus Paz PER R 4.50
 - Mora Pal PER R 5.00
 - Morka PER R 4.50
 - Mysterious Orb ART R 5.50
 - Natima Lang PER R 4.50
 - Neela PER R 4.50
 - No Loose Ends DIL R 3.50
 - Odo PER R 15.50
 - Orb Fragment ART R 4.50
 - Paltira PER R 4.50
 - Plain, Simple Garak PER R 8.00
 - Plans of the Obsidian Order OBJ R 3.50
 - Plans of the Tal Shiar OBJ R 3.50
 - Prakesh SIT R 6.00
 - Protouniverse INT R 3.00
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Rite

Play this Rite immediately after a pack defeats an Enemy in the Hunting Grounds of Renown 8 or more. This card is worth +2 victory points.

RENOWN 4

DOUBLE TAKES

FREE STUFF IS BETTER THAN NO STUFF

Hey kids, it's the first insert card available from **InQuest!** Back then, we didn't have a polybag, so it came in a little wrapper stapled into the magazine. It wasn't *magic*, and it wasn't exclusive. No, it was an obscure *Rage* card. But hey—it was something!

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- Vadek Winn PER R 6.00
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- Yeto PER R 4.50
- Zef'No PER R 4.00
- Dejar PER U 7.5
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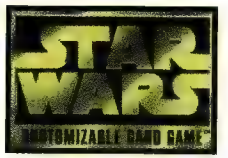
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Pr rarity denotes promo.

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STAR WARS DATA

G=COMMON U=UNCOMMON R=RARE

● DARK SIDE ○ LIGHT SIDE

AL Alien	DRO Droid	LIN Lost Interrupt	REB Rebel	UIN Used Interrupt
CRE Creature	EFF Effect	LOC Location	STA Starship	VEH Vehicle
DEV Device	IMP Imperial	OBJ Objective	UEF Utinni Effect	WEA Weapon

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After Hours

This Story Ends in Nudity

It was the ultimate goal: The *IQ Gamer* staff—a crack team of professionals who can master any game in just a few days—would lay the gauntlet down and attempt to achieve every gaming fans dream. They would see a naked chick without having to pay for it. The plan: Provoke two poker-playin' ladies here at Wizard Entertainment—administrative assistant Cassie Lopusnak and customer service rep Meghan Lofstrom—by saying “we’re professional gamers, and you can’t touch our poker mojo.” Then, with their feathers ruffled and minds clouded with rage, get them to agree on the best kind of poker—strip.

And they said yes way too easily. That sent staffers Mike Searle, Paul Sudlow and Brent Fishbaugh scrambling for the hills in fear for their tighty-whiteys, leaving only Games Editor Jeff Hannes and last-minute fill-in Research Assistant André Shell to put their pasty white butt-cheeks where their mouths were.

So what proved superior? The hard-edged gambling experience of two streetwise babes or the machine-like precision of over a decade of gaming experience? “I lost my pants” a disturbingly pale Hannes told uncomfortable reporters after the 45 minute match. “And I really should have listened to my mom’s advice about that whole ‘clean underwear’ thing. I feel dirty.”

Both ladies, having since pulled their eyes from their sockets, were unavailable for comment.

THE FULL MONTY *InQuest* proves that some people should always wear clothes.

CASSIE: Possibly psychologically scarred and put off men forever. Damn.

ANDRÉ: Far more nekkid than he should be.

JEFF: Owner of the world’s two smallest nipples.

MEGHAN: Currently filing a Class 2 sexual harassment suit. Soon to be vacationing in Bermuda.

PHILIPÉ: What André named this pair of boxers. Don’t ask.

YOWZA! The third worst smelling thing in this photo.

THE TOP 10...

RUMORS ALREADY CIRCULATING ABOUT STAR WARS: EPISODE II

10. Newfangled, coal-burning X-wings introduced.
9. Harrison Ford to return in surprise move, but only if he gets to “slap Hamill around a bit.”
8. Jar Jar’s sister Jugs Jugs shows up.
7. Less ass shots.
6. Due to lack of interest, “Episode II” shelved in favor of “Even More American Graffiti.”
5. Lucas taking advantage of cheap Indonesian labor; “special effects” to include sparklers and sock puppets doused in gasoline.
4. Yoda to retire to the writing life in Cabot Cove, Maine, but keeps getting wrapped up in murder mysteries concerning washed-up guest stars.
3. Boba Fett’s backpack actually shoots missiles!
2. The fate of the hazardous Q-wing fighter is revealed.
1. Dengar makes his debut. Sucks.

Photo by Paul Schreid



InQuest has had quite a few subtitles over the years. We debuted as “The Future of Gaming.” In issue #3, we switched to “The Ultimate Guide to Card Games” and to “The Guide to Collectible Card Games” in issue #6. We kept that title until issue #29, when we became “The Guide to Gaming” and finally settled on “The Gaming Magazine” in issue #32.

DEAR ADVERTISERS,

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WEEKLY IN MAY & JUNE, NANUET

WIZARD WORLD, the longest running tournament in Rockland! 1/4 mile east of Nanuet Mall on Route 59 in the Service Merchandise Shopping Center. *Magic* tournaments every Friday at 6 p.m. Players vote for tournament type—I, II, Draft—with prizes for the top three competitors. Sanctioned Type II tournaments on Mondays. Call for ARENA information. We also have a complete selection of *LSR*, *Star Wars*, *Battletech* and *Rage*, with events running Saturdays and Sundays in our dedicated gaming area. We will demo any game upon request. For further information, contact John or Kierin @ (914) 624-2224.

OHIO

JULY 1-4, COLUMBUS

ORIGINS INTERNATIONAL GAME EXPO & FAIR '99, Columbus Convention Center. Pre-registration weekend badge \$40, on-site \$45. Guests: celebrities, artists, authors, game designers and more. Events: Focus, history, celebrity signings, seminars, roleplaying games, largest independent War College, historical miniatures, RPGA events, live-action role playing events (LARPs), board and computer games, trading card games, auction, art show, a maze of games and more. Contact Andon Unlimited @ 1-800-529-EXPO to request a FREE pre-registration book or e-mail us at Andon@AOL.com. Preregister online at www.andonunlimited.com.

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VIRGINIA

JUNE 6, TYSONS CORNER (WASHINGTON D.C. AREA)

CAPITAL ASSOCIATES MONTHLY COMIC, TOY, MAGIC AND NON-SPORT CARD SHOW, Tysons Corner Westpark Hotel, 8401 Westpark Dr., McLean, VA. Directions: Take exit 10 (Route 7 west) off I-495, 1/2 mile west on Route 7. Hotel is on right. For further directions, call (703) 734-2800. 90 vendor tables: 1st table @ \$65, 2nd table @ \$60, 3rd+ @ \$55. \$2 admission, children under 5 FREE. FREE parking. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Buy, sell and trade: *MAGIC* and other gaming cards; gold, silver & new comics; independents; anime; figures; toys; BEANIE BABIES; posters; T-shirts; original artwork; non-sports cards; etc. Guests: Call Jeffery Rocen @ (703) 912-1993, check out <http://members.aol.com/comicshow> or e-mail comicshow@aol.com.

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The Name Game

Ever think that *Magic* card names have become kinda lame? Gone are Stone-Throwing Devils, Lord Of The Pit and Timetwister—replaced by Curfew, Catalog, Crawlspace and the like.

Don't complain. *InQuest Gamer* managed to get hold of a top secret memo listing the other names considered for recent *Magic* cards. We think the design team made all the right choices.

Final Name: Horseshoe Crab

Names considered: Horseshoe Beaver, Horseshoe Squirrel, Horseshoe Of Bogardan.

Final Name: Disruptive Student

Names considered: Gum-Chewing Student, Note-Passing Student, Student Of Bogardan.

Final Name: Wall of Junk

Names considered: Wall Of Crap, Wall Of Garbage, Wall Of Bogardan.

Final Name: No Rest For The Wicked

Names considered: No Sweets For The Wicked, No Toys For The Wicked, No Trip To Bogardan For The Wicked.

Final Name: Cave Tiger

Names considered: Cave Beaver, Cave Squirrel, Tiger Of Bogardan.

Final Name: Back to Basics

Names considered: Back To The Future, Back In Black, Back To _____. [Note to R&D: Try to come up with a good *Magic* word that starts with "B"].

Final Name: Show and Tell

Names considered: Study Hall, Intermediate Math, Bogardan: Land Of Mystery.

Final Name: Lull

Names considered: Dull, Pull, Bob Of Bogar... *Ah, we've beaten this "Bogardan" joke to death. No more. Honest.*

Final Name: Rain of Filth

Names considered: Rain Of Phil, Rain Of #2, Rain Of Dookey.

Final Name: Hush

Names considered: Sssshhhh, Shut Up, Shut Your Pie Hole.

Final Name: Power Sink

Names considered: Power Bathtub, Power Towel Rack, Power Toilet.

Final Name: Giant Cockroach

Names considered: Really Big Ant, Largish Pill Bug, Fat Fly.

Final Name: Annul

Names considered: Divorce, Separate, Kick The Bum Out.

Final Name: Iron Maiden

Names considered: Mötley Crüe, AC/DC, Deep Purple.

Final Name: Witch Engine

Names considered: What Engine, When Engine, How Engine.

Final Name: Douse

Names considered: Douche, Feminine Hygiene Rinse, Bogardan Fire Wash. *Okay, we couldn't help ourselves...*

The InQuest Gamer sense of humor? Straight from kinderbogardan.



Illustration by Brian Douglas Ahern.

THIS BITES *Magic* card names getting dam lame.



Ummm...donuts. The total number of donuts consumed by the staff multiplied by the total number of CCG cards accumulated over 50 issues equals the distance in kilometers from here to Uranus.

STAR WARS

EPISODE VII

Rise of the New Republic

With the death of the EMPEROR and the destruction of his second DEATH STAR, the evil GALACTIC EMPIRE collapses into confusion. Rebel Alliance leaders declare the creation of a NEW REPUBLIC, while Luke Skywalker trains a new generation of Jedi Knights.

But as the galaxy's citizens celebrate victory, rogue **IMPERIAL WARLORDS** prepare to strike! On the Imperial capital of **CORUSCANT**, an Imperial mastermind seizes power and declares war on the New Republic. And in the distant **UNKNOWN REGIONS**, the Emperor's foremost strategist, **GRAND ADMIRAL THRAWN**, rallies a massive fleet and gathers secret Imperial technology in preparation for an offensive to seize control of the galaxy...

That's the way the movies after "Return of the Jedi" would go, if they followed the current Star Wars history based off the books, comics and other stories officially approved by George Lucas and company. With all the prequel hype, *IQ Gamer* thought it'd make a refreshing change to research everything there is to know about our favorite characters beyond the movies and to ask the question, "What is the future of 'Star Wars?'"

Luke Skywalker

While lesser men might have retired after bringing down an evil Empire, that sort of thing's just a warm-up act for a guy like Luke Skywalker. In the years after the fall of Emperor Palpatine, he's tangled with alien invaders, Imperial warlords and Dark Jedi, re-established the order of Jedi Knights and even kissed a girl or two.

Luke had no sooner ushered daddy Anakin into the great beyond than he was called on to travel the backwater world of Bakura, ream an alien invasion fleet and send the dino Ssi-ruuk back into unknown space with their tails between their legs.

Burning to re-establish the order of Jedi Knights, Luke sought people who knew something of the Force. His first big lead was a Jedi Master named Joruuus C'baoth. Too bad C'baoth was an insane old coot and a clone enslaved by the Dark Side. Luke had to put the old boy down in a riveting lightsaber battle, but not before facing a clone of himself.

Luke's Doublemint fun continued when a clone of Emperor Palpatine returned to task the universe. In confronting the new Emperor, Luke turned to the Dark Side, studying it, trying to learn how to defeat it from within, and nearly fell into its power. But in the end, he recovered and dispatched the Emperor when he and newly Force-trained Leia turned one of the Emperor's Force storms—a Force-conjured, stellar-sized hurricane—against him. The Emperor lost control of the summoned storm and it consumed him.

All this killing of Dark Side clones got to be too much for one guy, so Luke started his own Jedi Academy on the jungle moon Yavin 4, the onetime secret Rebel base. There were a few glitches in the early days—like the time the spirit of an ancient Sith lord showed up and offed some of his students—but eventually he got things running smoothly, and for the first time in decades the galaxy has more than two Jedi flying around at a time.

Time enough for Luke to relax a bit and take a breather—maybe even get a girlfriend. Mara Jade, his one-time enemy, fills the bill nicely.

By Bill Smith



DARTN WATER Luke's still stomping the Dark Side 20 years after "Jedi."

HAN SOLO

To smugglers, being dead is better than being respectable. Add it up: General of the New Republic. War hero. Husband of the President of the New Republic. Han Solo is now, if anything, respectable.

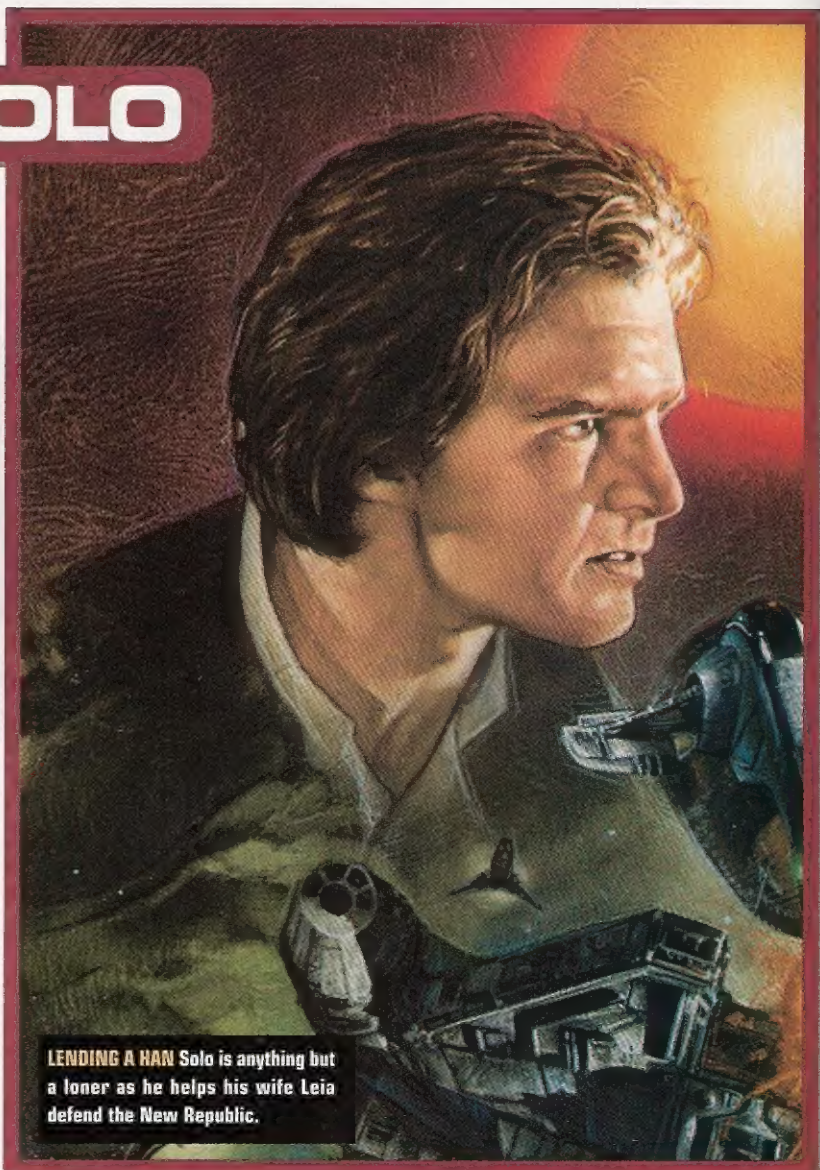
Han is still famous for what he does best: Outsmarting the bad guys. His first major pain was a rogue Imperial Warlord named Zsinj. After spending the better part of a year chasing him across the galaxy, Han defeated Zsinj at planet Dathomir when dozens of battle cruisers atomized Zsinj's Super Star Destroyer. That was also the year he married Leia Organa, after winning her back from the handsome and charming Hapan Prince Isolder who had courted Leia's affections.

Too restless to really settle down, Han spent decades looking for the least excuse to barrel off on adventures, often backing up his wife's diplomatic language with a well-placed blaster shot. He won over both the independent smugglers of the galaxy and a private fleet run by former Corellian Senator Garm Bel Iblis and convinced them to join the New Republic at a time when Grand Admiral Thrawn's Imperial fleets were moving in for the kill. Han also helped the Republic recover the lost Dark Force fleet of Katana dreadnoughts when the New Republic fleet was down to patched-together X-wings.

Seven years after Endor, Han flew to Kessel on a diplomatic mission, but he didn't exactly get a warm welcome: Moruth Doole, Kessel's renegade ruler, shot down the *Millennium Falcon* and dumped Han and Chewie in the spice mines. They escaped Kessel amidst explosions and laser blasts, but ended up prisoners at Maw Installation, the secret Imperial base which designed the original Death Star prototype. Fortunately, Han worked his usual magic, throwing the local Imperial fleet into disarray and stealing the Sun Crusher, an Imperial starship that can blow up stars.

Trouble found Han again when he returned home to Corellia. A revolutionary group named the Human League seized power and Solo was captured and brought before their leader, his sadistic cousin Thracken Sal-Solo. Han took a lot of abuse from Thracken as a kid, so it was time to get even: After escaping, Han teamed up with a New Republic fleet to destroy Thracken's fleet and oust his regime.

Han's a family man now, but he'll probably be taking down the bad guys from his deathbed.



LENDING A HAN Solo is anything but a loner as he helps his wife Leia defend the New Republic.

CHEWBACCA

Rescue Han. Take care of Princess. Fix *Falcon*. Rough up bad guys. Chewbacca's got the routine down by now. With a sworn life-debt to Han Solo—probably the most trouble-prone human in the galaxy—Chewie's life is never dull.

A former Imperial slave, Chewie took a personal hand in booting the slavers and their Trandoshan lackeys off his homeworld of Kashyyyk. Bounty hunter Bossk is a Trandoshan—it was his people who convinced the Imperials to enslave the Wookiees.

When Leia was being hounded by the Noghri, Chewie brought Leia to Kashyyyk; what other place in the galaxy could be safer than a city filled with Wookiees? While the Noghri were stopped, Chewie's lifelong best friend Salporin died while protecting Leia.

Chewie's life-debt has kept him close to the action and Han always seems to need a lot of looking after, like the time Han was captured by the Yevetha and Chewie and his son had to come to the rescue. Now, with peace at hand, Chewie splits his time between his "human family" of Han, Leia and their children, and his own family and friends back on Kashyyyk.

Cow Nose—*InQuest Gamer's* mascot and contributing editor Rick Swan's rotund rodent ravager—has been bandied about in the pages of the magazine since its early days, but she made her pictorial debut only recently, in issue 29. Since then, she's appeared 21 times in *InQuest*.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS



LEIA ORGANA SOLO

Leia's both warrior and diplomat, and she's had plenty of opportunities to show the galaxy both sides. With the Emperor dead, she rallied hundreds of worlds to sign onto the New Republic, preventing the galaxy from plunging into utter chaos. Between conferences and battles, Leia studied the Force and learned how to use a lightsaber.

When Grand Admiral Thrawn showed up, Leia found herself on the run from mysterious attackers, a previously unknown race named the Noghri. Originally the servants of Darth Vader, these slight but deadly warriors did the bidding of Imperial Grand Admiral Thrawn—until Leia convinced them that she was "Lady Vader" and their true mistress. They promptly switched sides and even took care of Thrawn; just as he was about to crush the New Republic, one of his Noghri bodyguards assassinated him on the bridge of his own Star Destroyer.

While the battles raged, Leia gave birth to Jacen and Jaina Solo. Then, a year later, after eliminating the reincarnated Emperor, Leia gave birth to Anakin Solo.

Leia became President of the New Republic, a role which has let her fulfill her destiny. She's faced some serious challenges, ranging from naive anti-military officials devoted to disarming the New Republic to terrorists blowing up the New Republic Senate Chamber and framing her husband. Her kids have faced danger any number of times—but threatening the children of a Jedi's daughter is not a smart thing to do, as several of her foes have discovered.

Leia's proven the Organa name proud as she's a great leader that helped the New Republic stretch across the stars, uniting millions of worlds and finally bringing peace to the galaxy—at least for another week.



PRESIDENT PRINCESS Leia's gone on to become the elected leader of the New Republic.

star wars TIMELINE



What does Star Wars' future look like? Here's a timeline of major post-"Jedi" events. The times are in years after the fall of the Empire on Endor.

- 0 Rebels defeat Ssi-ruuk aliens at Bakura.
- 3 Rogue Squadron captures Coruscant. Ysanne Isard thought killed in the Bacta War.
- 4 Imperial Warlord Zsinj killed at Dathomir. Leia and Han Solo marry.
- 5 Imperial Grand Admiral Thrawn takes over half the galaxy, but killed by his own Noghri bodyguards. Jacen and Jaina Solo born.
- 6 Reincarnated Emperor Palpatine nearly overthrows the New Republic, but is killed in battle with Luke and Leia. Anakin Solo born.
- 7 Luke Skywalker founds his Jedi Academy on Yavin Four.
- 8 New Republic defeats Imperial Admiral Daala, Durga the Hutt and other forces.
- 12 New Republic moves to "peace time footing" and disarms. The Yevetha, a dangerous alien race, attack but are defeated.
- 13 Terrorists bomb the New Republic Senate Chamber.
- 14 Han Solo stops cousin Thracken Sal-Solo from taking over Corellian system.
- 19 New Republic and remnant Imperial forces sign final peace treaty. Luke and Mara Jade marry.
- 20+ Jacen & Jaina Solo attend the Jedi Academy.

Bill Smith

TOP 10 TABOO "STAR WARS" CARDS

Decipher is well-known for being thorough in releasing cards from every aspect of the "Star Wars" Trilogy, but licensing restrictions and plain good taste prevent them from really pushing the envelope. Happily, none of that stuff is stopping us:

10. Wookiee Lice
9. Ambiguously Gendered Protocol Droid
8. Lando's 14th Bottle of Colt 45
7. Hot Wampa Luv
6. Luke's Doubly Impure Thoughts
5. Grand Moff Tarkin's Inflatable "Companion"
4. Dead, Dead, Dead Ewok
3. Greedo Shoots First (hey, wait a sec...)
2. Pants-less Vader
1. Sex with Jabba ■ IQ Gamer staff

MARA JADE

Mara Jade's a woman of many careers—agent of the Emperor, smuggler's aide and leader of a merchant empire. She started off as the "Emperor's Hand," an elite operative answering directly to the Emperor. Raised from childhood by the Emperor and trained in the ways of the Force, she would have been as feared as Vader—if she had allowed tales of her deeds to spread. Most witnesses ended up dead before they could carry the word of her achievement.

Palpatine sent her to the remote desert world of Tatooine on a simple mission: Infiltrate the palace of Jabba the Hutt and kill Luke Skywalker. She failed, and the Emperor died because of it.

Jade joined smuggling kingpin Talon Karrde and rose through his organization's ranks to become his chief lieutenant. Though seemingly poised and stable, dark dreams haunted her, the Emperor's spirit seemingly urging her to kill Skywalker.

So, when Luke wandered into her life, Mara was ready to kill him. She wanted to kill him, dreamed about killing him...and just couldn't do it. Finally recognizing that the Emperor was the bad guy all along, Mara and Luke became allies just in time to be captured by Thrawn. Mara tried to take Thrawn down by seizing control of his Star Destroyer and killing him by using the Force to crush his windpipe, but failed. Thrawn imprisoned her, but Luke later saved her.

After saving Luke from the mad clone C'baoth, Mara became an envoy at large for the newly-formed Smugglers' Alliance, giving her a good excuse to travel the galaxy and spy on anyone who needed to be watched. Mara also advanced her Jedi training under Luke.

Mara slowly rose to become a Master Trader, running her own company while training to someday take over Karrde's operations. Now, over a decade after she first allied with Luke, the galaxy is at peace and she and Luke can resolve their last bit of unfinished business: Marriage.



MRS. SKYWALKER Luke's wife, Mara Jade, was once the Emperor's deadliest assassin.

C-3PO and R2-D2

Artoo has stuck close to Luke, and has participated in many of his adventures. He saw first-hand the defeat of the Ssi-ruuk, Warlord Zsinj and Thrawn and the founding of the Jedi Academy.

Of course, Artoo's been more than furniture. For example, when Thrawn booby trapped the New Republic's core computers, Artoo sliced into the systems and got around Thrawn's trap programs. That turned a probable disaster for the New Republic into a nasty surprise for the Imperials.

When Luke "joined" the reincarnated Emperor, Artoo went right to work. Luke programmed Artoo with the command and control codes for the Empire's World Devastators. While Palpatine gleefully contemplated the destruction of the planet Calamari with these Star

Destroyer-sized war droids, Artoo plugged into the Imperial network and remotely shut them all down.

Then there's See-Threepio, who finds all the conflict too much for his circuits. He's been by Princess Leia's side continually, helping with languages, customs and protocol. After years of getting shot at by Imperial stormtroopers, it was nice to actually do the job he'd been programmed for.

Of course, it's never been that simple, almost always due to Han Solo. Han ordered Threepio to deceive the Noghri by imitating Leia in comlink transmissions to throw them off her trail. Threepio did the job, but he about soiled his golden britches pulling it off.



The most expensive feature to create? The "Book of Exodus" *Magic* feature from issue #39, chock full of sculpted Bottle Gnomes, artifact medallions, a Squee's Toy, handmade scrolls. When you factor in the cost of props and photography, the price tag hit the \$2,000 mark.

ANNIVERSARY FUN FACTS

WEDGE ANTILLES

“Wedge, we want you and your pilots to conquer Coruscant.” Fourteen to one-hundred billion odds. No problem. Might as well ask the pilots of Rogue Squadron to blow up the Death Star with only a proton torpedo. Oh wait, Wedge’s already done that. Twice.

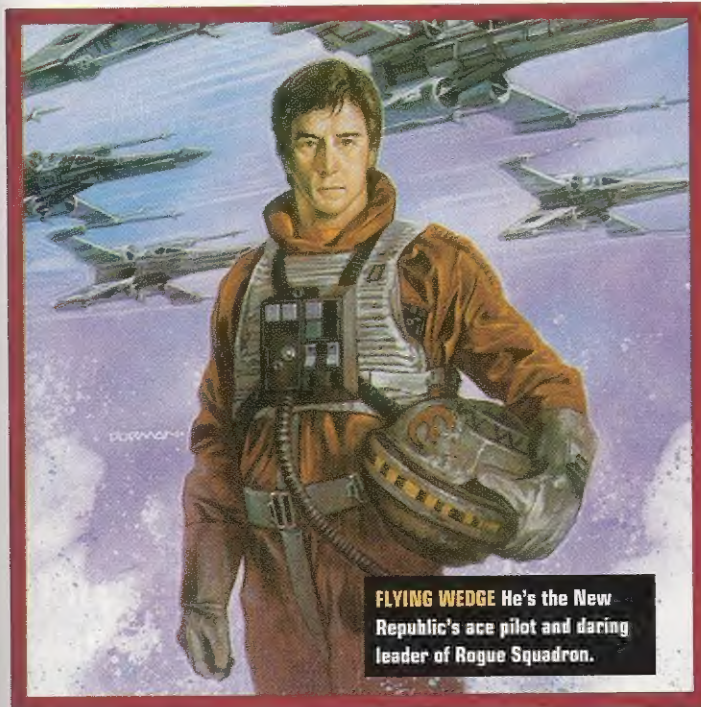
The crack Rebel X-wing group Rogue Squadron got its start on Hoth, and Wedge took command from Luke Skywalker soon after the fall of the Empire. During the New Republic’s first campaign to capture Coruscant, Wedge led Rogue Squadron to the Imperial stronghold to take out the planet’s security grid. Stranded and with no hope of reinforcements, Wedge found a greater ally: the forces of nature. The Rogues seized the planet’s climate control systems and triggered an electrical storm of titanic proportions, blowing out the planetary power grid and disabling the planetary shields. The New Republic took the former capital of the Empire almost without a fight. Not a bad day’s work.

However, the battle wasn’t yet over. Coruscant’s ruler, Ysanne Isard, fled but left behind a nasty present: the “Krytos virus,” a deadly and highly infectious disease that could be cured only with massive bacta treatments. So what was Isard’s next job? She became ruler of Thyferra, the galaxy’s major source of bacta.

With the New Republic unable to strike and Isard allowing millions to die as she withheld the bacta treatments, Wedge and the Rogues took matters into their own hands. They resigned their commissions and secured a private fleet of fighters. In a fortunate “coincidence,” they purchased a squadron of X-wings that had been classified as “surplus” by the New Republic, and soon the “Bacta War” was in full swing. Wedge, the Rogues and a group of private freighters decimated Isard’s Imperial fleet, capturing her Super Star Destroyer, the *Lusankya*, with Isard presumed dead in the battle.

Wedge formed Wraith Squadron, a misfit X-wing fighter squadron for covert missions, and helped take out Imperial Warlord Zsinj. Wedge and Rogue Squadron continued for many years to be the New Republic’s premier fighting force, with Wedge eventually becoming a New Republic general. He joined Ackbar and the other New Republic elite in directing the war against the last Imperial remnants and paving the way for a final peace.

Freelancer Bill Smith is confident that an Episode X would bring back those lovable Ewoks...infected with the Krytos virus.



FLYING WEDGE He's the New Republic's ace pilot and daring leader of Rogue Squadron.

shades of the EMPIRE



So will *Star Wars CCG* players ever be able to unleash Black Sun's top operatives against Darth Vader? How about sending some Noghri Death Commandos down to Endor to really teach the Ewoks a thing or two?

Don't get too excited just yet. Decipher is busy finishing up the expansions based on "Return of the Jedi," but there might be an expansion that goes beyond the movies. Jonathan Quisenberry, Decipher's CCG media relations specialist—and Red Leader when the killer decks come out—says, "We are looking into releasing the first of these products sometime later this year. It will probably follow the 'Shadows of the Empire' storyline and will probably not come as a full expansion."

So what's the deal? Will this set have photos, actors in costumes, computer-generated images, photo-realistic art? All undecided. Quisenberry says the set is likely to be "dedicated to those characters and events that are key to the story," but beyond that, there aren't any details for public release just yet.

Any talk of expansions beyond *Shadows*, for example based on the Timothy Zahn novels or X-wing comics, are well down the road—if they happen at all. Still, there would definitely be some excitement! Kyle Puttkammer of *Galactic Quest* in Burford, Ga., says, "Anything that Decipher puts out I get behind 100 percent...*Star Wars* is our number one selling game. I guarantee when the new 'Star Wars' movie comes out, everyone would be ready to play a movie expansion." ■ Bill Smith